"Full of meaningful, personal reflections and thoughtful analysis to avoid many pitfalls holding back modern social/political movements, *Full Spectrum Resistance* offers strategies and tools to carry activists forward toward deeper changes in the world."
—SCOTT CROW, author of *Black Flags and Windmills: Hope, Anarchy and the Common Ground Collective*

FULL SPECTRUM RESISTANCE

VOLUME TWO

ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

ARIC McBAY

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ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

ARIC McBAY

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Recap of Volume One
Building Movements and Fighting to Win

Welcome to Volume Two of *Full Spectrum Resistance*.

The first volume began by exploring why we need resistance movements, what makes them effective, and how they win.

To recap: We live in a world racked by serious crises of human rights, justice, and ecology, but the traditional left and progressive movements have been whittled down to a few ineffective tactics. We need a resistance movement if we want to achieve any lasting justice and to save our planet.

Much of the left has forgotten, mythologized, or sanitized social movements of the past and does not understand how those struggles were actually won. Movements win by developing political force, by developing cultures of resistance, and by taking action.

Conversely, those in power rule by divide and conquer. To succeed, resistance movements must build shared understanding and solidarity, and employ diverse tactics while reaching across divides to build powerful movements that can use disruption and militancy.

In *Full Spectrum Resistance,* I show how resistance movements form and organize in practical terms. And effective resistance movements are more alike than they are different. From the Montgomery Bus Boycott to anti-colonial insurgencies, all movements need to develop critical capacities like recruitment, intelligence, and strategy.

In the first volume, we touched on dozens of stories and movements, from the Black Panthers to Indigenous blockaders, from anti-apartheid struggles to ACT UP. And in different chapters we explored three of those critical movement capacities:

Recruitment & Training: Resistance movements are made out of people; to win they must constantly recruit new people, while strengthening communities of resistance and developing the skills of existing members.

Groups & Organization: There is no one right way to organize, but a group's structure must match their strategy; the most effective movements aren't militant or well-organized, but militant and organized.

Security & Safety: Resistance movements are a threat to power and must consciously protect themselves from external repression and infiltration; they also have to keep their members safe from internally damaging or disruptive people; history shows us many tools for accomplishing this, and also demonstrates what happens when we fail to use those tools properly.

In the second volume of *Full Spectrum Resistance*, we'll explore more stories of successful resistance, and learn from movements around the world.

How did a group of Greek anarchists take over a television station during a period of country-wide upheaval? How did a blind teenager build one of the most powerful resistance movements in Nazi-occupied France? How did liberation movements in Vietnam defeat far wealthier and more powerful invaders? And how did a small group of Indigenous women bring a decisive end to an unwanted garbage dump that a community fought against for decades?

We'll use those and other stories to investigate the critical capacities that successful movements must build. How they *communicate* with

supporters and each other (chapter 7). How they gather the *intelligence* they need to beat bigger opponents (chapter 8). How they understand and resist the systems of *counterintelligence and repression* that those in power will use to try to crush effective movements (chapter 9). And how groups and organizations *raise money and supply themselves* for the long fight (chapter 10).

Finally, we'll bring together every key idea and theme in this book to understand how movements take effective *action* (chapter 11), and how they combine these key capacities and build the *strategies and campaigns* that allow them to win (chapter 12).

If you need a refresher on key terms or ideas from this book, check out the glossary at the end of the volume.

For more information and bonus content, visit FullSpectrumResistance.org.

CHAPTER 7

Communications

“One can lack any of the qualities of an organizer—with one exception—and still be effective and successful. That exception is the art of communication. It does not matter what you know about anything if you cannot communicate to your people. In that event you are not even a failure. You’re just not there.”
—Saul Alinsky[1]

“If you’re not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed and loving the people who are doing the oppressing.”
—Malcolm X

GREEK TELEVISION TAKEOVER

It’s December 2008. In Greece, a revolt is underway. Economic collapse and government austerity have fueled rising political agitation and radical organizing. But it is the police murder of a fifteen-year-old named Alexis

that triggers an uprising. His death is the match that ignites fuel accumulated over decades of political action and repression.[2]

First, there are protests—and a few major riots—around the country. Then anarchists, radical leftists, and antiauthoritarians take over schools and squares. In some places, police stations and government buildings are attacked. Capitalism is a target as hundreds of luxury stores are destroyed. The occupied schools and government buildings become social and political hubs for distributing radical information.

But the media is still dominated by the propaganda of the government and the capitalists who caused the economic crisis in the first place. So Greek resisters decide to stage a takeover of a national television station so they can bring their message directly to a mass audience.

A group of artists, actors, documentarians, and anarchists spend a week in a basement planning the action. They decide to take over the three o'clock news (prime time in a country where most people take a midafternoon break).

They make huge maps of the station building and memorize them. Sympathetic insiders from the television industry work with them to prepare. They split the group into three teams to target the control room and studio, the master signal room, and the office of the station president. Each target is on a different floor, but must be reached at exactly the right time to ensure the takeover. They rehearse the plan until they have memorized every corner of the map; they time each step to the second.

The action happens on Tuesday, December 16.[3] To bypass security at the main door and avoid raising suspicion, they sneak people in through a side door a few at a time, over two hours, until all fifty activists are inside. They dress the part in suits and formal clothing; each person carries a prop for their cover story, like a file folder or a handful of mail.

They enter their target rooms at the appointed time. In the master signal room they call out instructions; in the control room, they take over the seats

of the corporate control staff. They act as friendly as possible, and reassure the staff that they will only be there a few minutes.

When the prime minister is in the middle of a live speech from parliament, they switch the video feed to the occupied studio. Those in the studio hold up enormous banners. “Don’t just watch us. Everyone get out in the streets!” one reads. Another says “Freedom to the Prisoners of the Insurrection” while a third adds “Freedom to Everyone.”

They stay on the air for a couple of minutes before another control room (which they didn’t know about) cuts off the signal. They thank the employees and politely begin their escape, taking the stairs rather than the elevators (so they can’t be trapped). They rendezvous at ground level and leave the building as a group.

As they leave they encounter police. But the police do not try to arrest the departing activists. In a time when insurgents are attacking police stations directly, the cops are relieved to see an action that is not violent, and so the successful radicals leave unimpeded.[4]

■ ■ ■

Without communication there can be no resistance. Communication is what allows isolated dissidents to join up, understand their situation, and plan for action. It is what allows a resistance group to break its isolation to become part of a movement, rooted in larger society.

Resisters need to communicate to strategize, analyze, mobilize, and act, especially under repressive surveillance states. Good communication is a prerequisite to successful recruiting, fundraising, and movement-building in general.

And conversely, it is the corporate media and other official channels of communication that allow the government to control the popular narrative and imagination, to smear or deceive resisters, to divide dissidents against

each other, even to obscure or erase struggles for justice from collective memory. So it's no surprise—with so much at stake—that effective resisters fight to reach out and communicate.

Rarely is that as dramatic as the takeover of a TV station in the middle of a parliamentary broadcast. Communication through less fantastic methods (giving interviews, making websites, and sharing pamphlets) is no less important. Effective communication doesn't have to be a spectacle (and the drive to *make it* a spectacle can be a trap the mass media use to distort movements).

I'm not going to tell you here how to make a zine or write a press release; those practicalities are handled in more detail elsewhere. I'm going to address bigger questions that are discussed less often: How do resistance movements communicate externally to reach sympathizers and supporters? How do they deal with the power and contradictions of the mass media? How do they communicate internally to build a shared culture and organize action? And how do they maintain safe communication—especially in underground groups—when dealing with repressive states and pervasive surveillance?

■ ■ ■

Jo Freeman (who wrote about the tyranny of structurelessness) argued that resistance movements need a specific kind of communications network: "Masses alone don't form movements, however discontented they may be."[5] Small informal groups may form spontaneously, she explains, but "if they are not linked in some manner, the protest does not become generalized: it remains a local irritant or dissolves completely. If a movement is to spread rapidly, the communications network must already exist."[6]

The existence of a friendly communication network determines how—and how quickly—a movement will be able to grow and develop. And that form of that communications network may determine the form of the movement.

Communication and organization go hand in hand. According to Freeman, the women's movement of the 1960s and '70s could be divided into two branches: a well-established liberal "reform" branch, and a newer "radical" branch. The reform branch was formally organized—with boards and bylaws—while the radical branch consisted of small groups with few intergroup connections.[7]

The newer branch, she wrote, "prides itself on its lack of organization. From its radical roots, it inherited the idea that structures were always conservative and confining, and leaders, isolated and elitist. Thus, eschewing structure and damning the idea of leadership, it has carried the concept of 'everyone doing her own thing' to the point where communication is haphazard and coordination is almost nonexistent. Thousands of sister chapters around the country are virtually independent of each other, *linked only by numerous underground papers, journals, newsletters, and cross-country travelers.*"[8]

Freeman explains: "The different structures . . . have . . . largely determined the strategy of the two branches, irrespective of any conscious intentions of the participants." Or to put it another way, strategy follows structure.

That's not necessarily bad, assuming the different parts of the movement can work together, as Freeman notes: "Intramovement differences are often perceived by the participants as conflicting, but it is their *essential complementarity which has been one of the strengths of the movement.*"[9]

Freeman argues that in the 1960s a series of crises mobilized feminists, and organizing efforts were able "to weld spontaneous groups together into

a movement."[10] But, she warns, this wouldn't have happened without a pre-existing communications network that was amenable to feminist ideas.

Those lessons apply to any movement that wants to win. A communications network must be built (or an existing one repurposed). Otherwise groups will remain fragmented and isolated.

And something must happen to trigger larger action. Freeman notes that "a crisis will only catalyze a well-formed communications network." If that communications network isn't there, then crises will pass and opportunities for real change will be missed. Freeman argues that "people must be organized. Social movements do not simply occur."[11]

If a movement is unable or unwilling to build its own communications channels—especially to those outside the movement—then someone else may take on that role. The mass media will have a communication monopoly, and depict that movement in a way that suits its own purposes.

RESISTANCE AND THE MASS MEDIA

"There is no such thing, at this stage of the world's history in America, as an independent press," said *New York Times* journalist and chief editorial writer John Swinton, upon winning an award from his peers. "There is not one of you who dare write your honest opinions, and if you did, you know beforehand that it would never appear in print." And he laughed at the idea of an independent press—the owners of the papers are in charge, not the editors. "We are the jumping jacks, they pull the strings and we dance."[12]

That was in 1880. Corporate control has only gotten stronger.

If you've tried to get press coverage for radical action before, you already know this: the news isn't made by intrepid individual reporters and editors driven by the drive to spread "the truth." It's made by a media-industrial complex, mostly owned and controlled by a handful of

companies. Those companies compete for public attention and advertising dollars.

Despite the perpetual assertion by conservative pundits that the media has a left-wing bias, this corporate ownership structure produces precisely the opposite. As Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky pointed out in their classic book *Manufacturing Consent*, only the wealthy (and their companies) can afford to own large and expensive media infrastructure on a mass scale. Those who own huge printing presses, sprawling television studios, and satellite distribution networks are already wealthy, and they have the attitudes of the affluent class.

That doesn't mean that all news media are the same, or that there aren't individual people who want genuinely good and fair news, or that the rise of the internet hasn't complicated the situation. Individual reporters are sometimes very friendly to dissidents. But the structural bias of the mass media is against radicals and revolutionaries. This doesn't take a degree in media studies to grasp—radical activists figure it out for themselves when they are smeared or ignored in the media.

For these reasons, many radicals have become deeply cynical or even antagonistic toward the media, to the point of refusing to engage with them in any way. In 2002 I joined an anti-poverty march to set up a protest squat. The organizers seized an abandoned building, and the rest of us set up camp in a perimeter around the building to protect them. After night fell, a TV crew arrived and started asking if anyone wanted to do an interview. A group of punks started yelling curses and insults at the TV crew. After a few minutes of this, the TV crew left, shouting that we would be on our own if the police decided to raid and beat us all up. In another city at a public rally in front of a courthouse, I saw some people try to spray-paint the camera lens of a different TV crew, apparently out of spite.[13]

I can understand—especially given the media's claims to inform and enlighten—why people get angry when the mass media lie, ignore, or hide

the truth. I get angry, too. And I can respect if individuals or groups choose not to engage with the corporate media.

As individuals we can make those choices. But that's not an option for movements.

Obscurity can be comfortable, especially if the press is already biased against your radical politics. But for aboveground movements, obscurity is fatal. Militant suffragists like the Pankhursts knew this, which is why they escalated to civil disobedience and property destruction. Trevor Lloyd writes: "Sympathy was worth having, but it was not enough. . . . The Pankhursts . . . knew that to make progress they had to arouse public opinion and make people interested in the question. They may have realised that this would arouse hostility, but hostility was more useful than indifference."[14]

Those in power don't have to like us—nor do the majority of people have to love us—but they can't ignore us if we are going to win. Our worst enemy is apathy.

If a movement has any impact on the power structure, it will get covered in the mass media, whether it wants to or not. The effects of that mass-media coverage are profound. They will alter the structure and tactics of the movement.

And let's be clear, the mass media have been essential to the success of many social movements and resistance movements in history. If footage of the Freedom Rides had not made the evening news so consistently, popular sentiment may not have turned against segregation the way it did, and the Freedom Rides may have ended in obscure defeat (and with many more casualties).

But measuring success by mass-media coverage is dangerous. It allows the press to set the agenda; it twists and distorts movements in predictable ways. Jules Boykoff writes: "Mass-media coverage—or a lack thereof—influences the nature, form, and development of social movements, as well

as the ability of these movements to reach their goals. Understanding the role of the mass media is crucial to comprehending how social movements coalesce, build, and maintain themselves, as well as how they decide to frame their dissident messages."[15]

If we want to be successful resisters, it's not enough just to despise the corporate media. We need some understanding of how they work, how they alter movements, when they can be used effectively, and how we can avoid their traps. If we understand those things, then we can decide for ourselves when and how we want to engage with them, and when it is better to use and develop our own channels of communication.

How the mass media depict and distort resistance movements

Scholars and analysts have identified recurring patterns in the way that news is created and framed. I'll use examples mostly from US media here, partly to develop a coherent picture and partly because of the dominance of US media companies. But these patterns occur around the world. Depiction of resistance movements is driven by a number of factors:

Sensationalization, dramatization, and novelty-seeking. Even if they are sympathetic to a resistance movement, media corporations are competing for audience attention. They get attention by emphasizing the most sensationalist, spectacular, or novel aspects of any story. They zero in on aspects of a social movement that appear most exciting or controversial, usually at the expense of covering underlying issues or grievances.

Framing, marginalization, and trivialization. Paradoxically, although the mass media want new images and events, they also want to frame that material in a way that is familiar—even formulaic—for the audience.

Frames are news shortcuts. Journalistic clichés. Story stereotypes. William Gamson and Andre Modigliani write that a frame is "a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events, weaving a connection among them. The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue."[16]

This is not always meant to be deceptive; it's a function of how news works. A typical book might be 100,000 words long. A typical newspaper article is a thousand words or fewer. The narration of a typical television news story comprises fewer than one hundred words. That leaves very little room for thoughtful context, nuance, or subtlety. (And thoughtfulness doesn't make for good spectacle.)

Frames allow journalists to simplify (or oversimplify) a complex issue by presenting it in a set formula from the headlines on. They pick and choose their facts or quotes, selecting those that fit their frame and ignoring those that don't. News reporting a protest against an international summit like the G20 will usually ignore issues of global inequity and focus on more sensational frames.[17]

Consider the *violence frame*, in which reporters ignore root issues in order to obsess about whether there will be "violence" and how police are preparing for it. A typical headline with this framing might read "Police warn violent protesters in advance of summit" or, more indirectly, "Hospitals prepare for G20 casualties." This framing begins in advance of a protest date; it is less about actual events than about setting expectations.

The *disruption frame* also disregards the issues to focus on stories about how "regular people" are disrupted. Typical headlines might read: "G20 turning downtown Toronto into a ghost town" or "City on lockdown" or "Small businesses press government for compensation."

Another frame centers on protesters' "absurd ineffectuality." Yet another is the "freak frame," which again ignores issues and emphasizes

protesters' appearance or clothing, and marginalizes activists by "showing demonstrators to be deviant or unrepresentative" as Todd Gitlin puts it.[18]

One damaging frame emphasizes internal conflict: the "good protesters" versus the "bad protesters."

Frames don't have to be explicitly stated, and usually aren't. Rather, they are *invoked* by the use of specific words and phrases, images, and the structure and emphasis of news coverage. Media frames consistently reinforce existing biases and prejudice. Remember that, after the Katrina disaster in New Orleans, Black people were depicted as "looting" stores while white people doing the same thing were "finding supplies."

Framing has major effects on how resistance movements are perceived and how well they are able to mobilize support. Environmental campaigner Chris Rose argues that such frames "not only make everything sound familiar but also, when added together, suggest that problems are either insoluble or certainly out of reach for ordinary people."[19] Because the same set of frames is constantly used, the implicit statement is that the outcome, too, will repeat, and that nothing can ever change.

A media obsession with violence framing also serves as a way of intimidating people who might consider attending protests.[20] Media framing can shift who shows up for an event and the sorts of recruits available for social movements.[21]

Sara Falconer warns that this tendency to oversimplify has worsened in recent years as online news sources rush to be "first" even if their reports are simplistic, misinformed, or simple hoaxes. We've seen not only the rise of exaggerated "clickbait" stories but also simply fake news.

If individual corporate journalists deviate from the desired framing and sensationalism, they will either be drowned out by the mass-media cacophony or forced to fall in line by their superiors.

False balance and deference to authority. Though the mass media claims to be "objective," it often uses false balance to undermine social movements and progressives. For example, an anti-war protest with 100,000 might be treated as equal in relevance to a counterprotest with one thousand attendees, when it is obviously not.[22] In the global warming "debate" in the mass media, thousands of actual climate scientists are given equal time to right-wing talking heads with no credentials in climate science whatsoever. The implicit assumption is that the two arguments have equal weight, and that the truth lies somewhere in between.

False balance isn't just about giving air time to reactionaries, but about comparing liberatory radicals with so-called "equivalent extremists" on the other side. So the Deacons for Defense or the American Indian Movement could be framed as extremists and—just as COINTELPRO wanted—as racial hate groups akin to the KKK. Never mind that one side was trying to *prevent* lynchings while the other was trying to commit them.

This phony objectivity also shows in quote sources. A news article about a group opposed to a G20 gathering will almost always include "official" quotes undermining the dissident message and reinforcing the dominant talking points. This is included for reasons of "balance." But the reverse is unlikely—when official statements are made about a meeting or government policy, it's rare for reporters to get a balancing quote from someone outside of the political establishment. In any case, authority always gets the last word.

Disregard and undercounting. In an extension of authority getting the last word, protest attendance is routinely undercounted, with "official" police counts used over third-party tallies or counts by protest organizers. This has been documented in anti-war protests from Vietnam to Iraq.[23]

Sometimes massive protests are simply ignored by the media. This undermines the ability of social movements to succeed using nonviolence

and makes it easier for police to crack down on protesters.

This disregard makes it especially important for movements to have their own means of communication, and some movements would have withered without it. During the civil rights sit-ins, organizers relied on direct contact to share information and support each other, since local media might refuse to cover civil rights actions.

Demonization. Framing dissidents as freaks is one option. If that doesn't work, the next step is to frame them as dangerous, either by equating them with a criminal element or some other enemy.

Framing resisters as criminals is a classic (and often effective) tactic, because it delegitimizes resistance struggles and makes the public accept the use of police violence and imprisonment. After all, that's what police do to the bad guys, right? Almost every time there is a large-scale protest against war or against a summit, the media obligingly stoke fears of "mob violence" while airing police press conferences with tables of "seized weapons" like books, water bottles, or cigarette lighters.[24]

One of the most effective ways of demonizing domestic political groups is to associate them in the media with some foreign enemy, what Jules Boykoff calls "bi-level demonization." He explains: "Once an individual or group has been demonized through linkage to an external enemy, further suppression can occur with fewer objections from the general population."[25]

This is an old trick for the state. Around the time of World War I, the Wobblies and other radicals had made significant gains, so the state claimed that they were associated with the "German menace." Members were arrested, and the state and media made vague claims about German money funding a labor conspiracy meant to undermine American industry through strikes, in order to weaken the war effort. At the same time, the government shut down many radical publications, claiming that their pro-peace stance

was “treasonous.” Concrete evidence was not required—the goal was to disparage the moral character of labor radicals while justifying repression against them.[26]

In Canada during both World War I and World War II, large numbers of labor organizers and other radicals were interned in prison camps, because of ancestry in “enemy” European countries.

After World War II and the defeat of Germany, the era of McCarthyism brought a new foreign enemy, the USSR.[27] And so Communism became the excuse to crack down, smear, or blacklist domestic radicals. When the United States invaded Vietnam, the state and media propaganda shifted its focus. The media emphasized the presence of Vietnamese flags in peace marches as a sign that anti-war protesters were traitors in league with foreign enemies.[28]

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Communism has been replaced by terrorism as the main “enemy” for use in bi-level demonization. Especially since 9/11, terrorism has proved an incredibly effective means of demonizing enemies. Without a clear and concrete enemy, and without any limits or end date to “the war on terror,” the smear of terrorism can be used widely against almost any internal enemy.

The breadth of application is remarkable. Boykoff quotes a statement from the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center: “You can almost argue that a protest against (a war ostensibly against international terrorism) is a terrorist act,” said a spokesperson. “I’ve heard terrorism described as *anything that is violent or has an economic impact*, and shutting down a port certainly would have some impact. Terrorism isn’t just bombs going off and killing people.”[29]

The specter of terrorism has been invoked against everything from anti-war movements to Indigenous groups to immigrant movements. It’s been especially useful in the Green Scare, against the Earth Liberation Front, the Animal Liberation Front, and Stop Huntingdon’s Animal Cruelty.

Direct media manipulation: story implantation, media ownership, journalist strong-arming, censorship. If business as usual in the corporate mass media doesn't produce the "correct" results, those in power will intervene directly in the mass media to get what they want. Boykoff argues that direct strong-arming is rare, not because those in power would find it unethical, but because it is usually unnecessary. The existing frames and norms of power serve them well.[30]

Nonetheless, history is replete with examples of direct state intervention in the mass media. As part of COINTELPRO, the FBI and their puppets frequently made direct revisions to major news reports or simply wrote whole articles from scratch. This wasn't always subtle; during the 1960s, US President Lyndon B. Johnson would call newscasters and network bosses (from Dan Rather up to the President of CBS) in the middle of news broadcasts to argue, curse, intimidate or threaten them. It worked, and the tone of coverage shifted.[31] Nixon continued this approach, using the FBI and the CIA to wiretap and threaten journalists, warning that they would yank broadcast licenses if there was coverage unfriendly to the administration.[32]

Direct media manipulation hasn't stopped, of course. The Bush administration paid journalists directly—often hundreds of thousands of dollars per person—for positive coverage.[33] The use of embedded reporters in Iraq and Afghanistan also changed the dynamic, with reporters being forced to rely on US troops for their information and—often—for their lives.[34] (That's not just a turn of phrase: many independent and non-embedded reporters were killed by the US army, such as on April 8, 2003, when a US tank fired a shell into the Palestine Hotel, killing two journalists and injuring others in a hotel with a reputation for hosting reporters.)

Sometimes the manipulation comes not from the state, but from corporate elites who own broadcast companies. Of course, much of the

news at the best of times consists merely of repackaged corporate press releases and talking points.

The Consequences

All of these media functions—whether deliberate or incidental—have massive effects on movements. A key function of this media treatment, is, as always, divide and conquer. An emphasis on sensationalism and internal conflict—combined with systematic forms of counterintelligence and repression I'll come back to later—splits social movements into easily manageable parts. At mass protests, this means the "good protesters" and the "bad protesters," those who follow police rules and those who don't. The "good protesters" will disperse on police order, and the "bad protesters" can be dealt with using riot cops, tear gas, and violence, often with the tacit consent of the good protesters. On a larger scale, it means splitting movements into co-opted moderates who don't threaten the institutions of power and isolated radicals who can be attacked more freely. These effects twist the tactical priorities of moderates and militants.

Todd Gitlin gives a clear illustration of how this played out for the anti-war organizers during the US invasion of Vietnam. The mass media fed a belief among anti-war leaders that "one more dramatic mass action, and then one more, one more, one more . . . might really stop the war, might really convince the more rational bloc of the foreign policy elite that the political costs of continuing the war were simply too high to bear. But this euphoria could not be sustained."[35]

Gitlin explains: "For however much it appeared to be militant revolt, each action actually amounted to a form of *petitioning*: large numbers of people were required to locate their bodies on a given spot and get counted. Many in the movement, half-recognizing this fact and doubting that their

petitions were getting anywhere, were driven toward despair. The feeling of powerlessness in the movement fueled its revolutionary turn and inflated its rhetoric."[36]

Not only were most protests a form of lobbying—which requires very large numbers of people—but the media demands on novelty. If ten thousand people marched one month, it might take fifteen thousand to make the evening news next time. And then twenty thousand. Leaders were trapped in an expanding cycle of escalating rhetoric, in which they constantly had to increase their claims and promises to get more people, just to maintain the same level of media coverage.

One way to compensate for limited numbers is to increase the amount of disruption and militancy of a smaller group, as Students for a Democratic Society did. But letting the media set the agenda is a dangerous game, especially when that means ratcheting up militancy faster than a movement's base can support or sustain it.

Street combat wasn't the only way to get media attention. Some, like Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman (founders of the Yippies) appealed to the mass media's desire for strangeness and novelty. At a rally in 1967, Hoffman tried to levitate the Pentagon while Allen Ginsberg led Tibetan chants. (The crowd was eventually attacked and driven back by the army.) Gitlin discusses how Rubin started to dress up in strange costumes, as in 1968 when he posed for cameras "in a confused uniform of Indian war paint, hippie beads, Vietnamese sandals, and a toy machine gun—a living emblem of the confusion of iconographic realms . . . and of the counterculture's insensitive, mechanical appropriation of the insignia of oppressed people."[37] They got attention, but their stunts came across to some as bizarre and unrelated to deeper issues like the draft, poverty, or racism. Gitlin argues that Rubin was driven by his ego and "acquired a *following* instead of a face-to-face political base."[38] After his following collapsed, Rubin became a stockbroker and cheerleader for capitalism.[39]

Mass-media portrayals also change who is recruited into movements. Media coverage of Students for a Democratic Society focused on violence and street battles, attracting a new and more combative group of recruits. Gitlin: “The media helped recruit into SDS new members and backers who expected to find there what they saw on television or read in the papers. The flood of new members tended to be different from the first SDS generation—less intellectual, more activist, more deeply estranged from the dominant institutions. Politically, many of them cared more about anti-war activity than about the broad-gauged, long-haul, multi-issued politics of the earlier SDS. They were only partially assimilated into the existing organization; they viewed the SDS leaders, the remnants of the founding generation, with suspicion.”[40]

Some of these—the so-called Prairie Power people—had a different political development than the old guard. “Coming from more conservative regions, Texas and the Great Plains primarily, many of the new generation had become radical quickly, because even mild rebellion against right-wing authority—hair grown slightly long, language grown obscene, or the like—provoked repression. If one were to be punished for small things, it was only a small step to declaring oneself an outlaw in earnest, a communist, a revolutionary: as soon to be hanged for a sheep as for a goat.”[41] Many of those new recruits were uninterested in working with less militant groups.

On the other hand, those who did play to the mass media could become counterculture celebrities. But their celebrity status also isolated them from their movements. Gitlin argues: “Narcissistic motives, once negligible or contained, inevitably flourished, fattened by rewards, while more cooperative impulses withered. The celebrities lost much of whatever active, reciprocal relations they had sustained with their constituency; this loss hurled them back into the world of the spectacle. But it is those densely lived back-and-forth relations that keep political strategy alive to actual social possibilities. Sealed off from the possibility of experienced social

observation, the celebrities became inferior strategists."[42] No leader or organizer can be effective if they are sealed off from their movement and surrounded by yes-men; strategic progress requires that we interact with people who will give us new ideas and constructively challenge us.

Another function of this new celebrity was an increase in horizontal hostility. With a limited supply of mass-media attention, even minor fame could provoke jealousy, backbiting, and competition.[43]

Some leaders, Gitlin explains, abdicated their positions rather than fall into the celebrity trap.[44] "The abdicators refused to be the victims of the conflicting demands made upon them; to save themselves from the dissociated of the looking glass, they removed themselves from leadership altogether. And then the movement suffered from the loss of its more sensitive leaders: the field was left to those less vulnerable to peer criticism, less accountable to base."[45] This is an unfortunate side effect of the radical left's habit of trashing those in visible positions—it drives out the people who actually listen and care.

Although the militancy of these anti-war organizations had some success, Gitlin argues, "the movement's inflated rhetoric and militancy, its theatrics and bravado, also did great damage to the movement's ability to survive, to grow, to mature, and to adapt to a more repressive political climate."[46]

Gitlin lists three specific consequences of the media dynamic and extremist portrayal for the movement. "First," he explains, "*the movement was isolated—and isolated itself—politically*, just at a time when anti-war sentiment was growing fast and, if unified, could have multiplied its political weight."[47]

"Second, *face-to-face organizing dried up.*"[48] Some leaders abandoned the slow and difficult work of grassroots organizing for the immediate rewards of mass-media attention. The spectacle grew at the expense of

radical community. (In the words of one leader: “Organizing is just another word for going slow.”[49])

“And third, *there arose—with no small assist from the media—a moderate alternative to the movement.*”[50] Partly because—especially after the Tet Offensive—it looked like the United States was losing the war, many mainstream moderates and Democrats began to oppose the war.[51] What the media wanted “was *conflict* between moderates and radicals. The moderates were undoubtedly on the move and undoubtedly had a vast popular base and high-level political support in Congress.”[52]

Any kind of movement—liberal, radical, militant, moderate—can be distorted, undermined, or even destroyed if it falls prey to these mass-media trends. So how can radical movements communicate in a way that will actually strengthen their movements and communicate their moral positions and their truths?

COMMUNICATION FOR RADICALS

We can’t rely on the mass media to do our job for us. We can use the mass media as a tool, but it’s only one tool among many, and we have to understand its capabilities and limitations.

Given that, we can come up with our own communication strategies for our groups and our campaigns—strategies that draw on real-world experience and underlying principles of communication. Because there *are* underlying principles of effective communication, whether you are making your own zines or posting on Tumblr or giving an interview to the *New York Times.*

While researching this book I scoured resistance movement resources for examples of effective outreach and communication. I found a lot of them, but I also found a lot of not-so-great material. To bluntly generalize,

radical propaganda of recent years is too often vague and abstract, overly long, and filled with jargon that would be impenetrable to outsiders. Messaging often emphasizes the importance of vast systems of control beyond the human scale, which can be difficult to mobilize people around. (Even terms like “capitalism”—which I use all the time—don’t have a consistently clear meaning across different audiences and can seem overwhelming.)

More liberal propaganda tends to emphasize the need for education and dialogue with those in power, a comforting routine that rarely challenges, motivates, or mobilizes people.

Few dissidents seem to follow Saul Alinsky’s simple advice: Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it.

I learned a lot about communication for radicals by speaking to Sara Falconer. Sara is one of the organizers behind the *Certain Days* political prisoner calendar and 4strugglemag, an online and print zine for prisoners and their supporters. She was educated in communications and media studies, and now specializes in digital and social strategy for NGOs. She’s the perfect person to explain how radicals can use effective communications principles without compromising their political principles.

We sat down for breakfast in Toronto, and I asked her about how activists can communicate more effectively. She told me that radicals can benefit from learning the communications principles used by professionals, even if we find PR objectionable: “It’s an any-means-necessary sort of thing. I can’t imagine why we wouldn’t use what we know about communications to reach people’s hearts and minds about the things that are most important. The government and corporations are using these tools against people to convince them that their way is right. There’s no reason we shouldn’t fight back in the same way.”

She encourages radicals to realize “people have been conditioned to expect being communicated to in a certain way. If you don’t speak to people

in a way that resonates with them, then they're not listening to you. You're competing against countless slick messages and images, whether it's in their Facebook feed or on a table of literature. You can't compete by offering forty-page manifestos, photocopied seventy times and full of typos. It has to be something that looks appealing, that has emotional appeal, with short pieces of information people can grasp quickly."

Between my discussion with Sara, and tips in other radical communications resources, some principles for radical communication started to become clear.

Understand your goal. Decide beforehand what you want to communicate to whom and why. What do you want to get across? What do you want people to do? What is a successful outcome?

Do you want to challenge an official perspective? Get people to come to an event? Build a relationship with the audience? Are you trying to mobilize people to action? To inform people? To make them more sympathetic or even recruit them? To send a message to your opposition that you are a force to be reckoned with? There is a big difference between trying to change minds and trying to evoke existing ideas and values, but both approaches have their place.

Resisters always need a clear goal to make the most of their limited resources. If you're quoted in a newspaper article or TV news report, you might only have thirty words to get your point across. Know what you want to accomplish to use them effectively. (Also, without a goal, you'll be unable to assess whether you are communicating successfully.)

Greenpeace organizer Chris Rose suggests: "Never start by saying 'let's have a video,' or 'so we need a press release,' or commissioning a report, and then trying to construct the campaign to make use of it. This is a classic 'communications amateur' error, and can be very expensive."[53]

Not all resistance movements seek favorable press coverage. Animal rights group SHAC had a very different approach, as *Rolling Thunder* magazine explained: "SHAC activists differed from participants in most other social movements in that they neither perceived themselves to need positive press coverage nor regarded negative press coverage as a bad thing. Their goal was to terrify corporations out of doing business with [animal-testing company Huntingdon Life Sciences], not to win converts to the animal rights movement. The more fearsome and crazy they appeared in the media, the easier it was to intimidate potential investors and business partners. Activists in other circles feared that the terrorism scare would make it easy for the government to isolate them by portraying them as dangerous extremists; for SHAC, the more dangerous and extreme they appeared, the better."[54] (We'll come back to SHAC in chapter 11.)

Know your audience; have a conversation in terms that resonate with them. Chris Rose explains: "In most campaigning, it's best to abide by the marketing dictum 'Start from where your audience is,' and find a way to lead to the action you want people to take, or the conclusion you need them to reach, by starting from something they are already interested in, or concerned about. Campaigners who project their concerns and perspectives onto others . . . rather than research audience perceptions, tend to fail."[55]

Most of the time people are not motivated by facts or arguments, he adds, but how the issue is framed, "whether it meets the psychological needs of an audience, and whether factors such as the channel, messenger or context are right. Effective campaigning [i.e., mobilization] . . . results from identifying key audiences for change and then finding out what will motivate them. Neither 'education' nor 'changing minds' often come into it."[56]

Sara similarly advises: "Think about the audience. What level are they at? How should you speak to them? What is going to touch them?

Understand that there are different audiences. You wouldn't talk to a younger demographic, brand new to activism, the same way you would to people who've been around for 40 years. The same messaging isn't going to work for both people."

There is often a difference between what a communicator wants to say and what will draw people in. Sara suggests to start with a hook, and *then* draw people in to discuss what you think is important. "You can't just talk to them as if you've already won the argument."

As an example for improvement, she tells me about press releases she and colleagues put out during a prisoner hunger strike, saying: *It's our duty to support these people. There's a hunger strike on. We have a responsibility to stand up for these prisoners.* She muses: "Who is that message for? People who already believe that? Because you don't really need to be talking to them in that same way. If it's for people who don't know that we have a responsibility to support prisoners, people who don't understand why this is an important part of our struggle, then you have to start with introductory stuff to bring people along with you."

Radicals too often start as if they have won the argument already, Sara observes. "We have to try really hard to break that habit." We have to ask: "Who is this for? What do we need to start this conversation? Conversation is what people want now. They want to feel that you are listening to them."

She notes that asking a question when posting online increases shareability dramatically. "'Have you experienced anything like this?' 'Have you ever written to a prisoner?' People like being asked their opinion."

Chris Rose similarly advises: "Forget old saws such as 'getting your message across'. Campaigners who focus on 'sending [a] message' will never succeed: they will persuade no one but themselves." Successful communication is two-way. "If someone does not want to receive your message, they won't. Would-be communicators therefore need to

understand the motivations of their audience. All too often, communication is treated as a technical, one-way process beautifully designed to reflect the views of the sender, unsullied by the need to be effective with the receiver."[57]

Jargon is a big obstacle to effective communication. If you want to speak clearly, speak in the language that people understand rather than trying to argue with them about definitions and orthodoxy.

Make it personal. Sister Helen Prejean, an anti–death penalty advocate, explains: "Personal encounter, however it happens, is what gets us involved in deep issues that change our lives forever. It's always involved, in some way or another, in meeting people. You can only look at movies, and read books, and hear speakers so long, but somewhere in there we have got to get our hands in there, and get directly involved with people, because that's where the passion happens, and that is where the life-changing experiences happen."[58]

Sara adds: "People connect with personal stories, versus numbers or facts or arguments. If you can tell them about a particular person, or share somebody's voice with them, it's so much more effective."

Am I not a man and a brother? This 1787 image was intended to humanize enslaved people as part of a campaign against the slave trade. It became one of the most widely used antislavery graphics in history, and even became a fashion statement, reproduced countless times for use on medallions, posters, bracelets, hairpins, pottery, pipes, and snuffboxes. But the supplicant posture of the man shown had an unintended consequence: "its ultimate effect was to underscore the perception of Black inferiority."[59]

Be specific, concise, direct. Then repeat. You have very little time to get your message across. That means you have to keep your key points simple and clear.

Sara explains: “That doesn’t mean dumbing things down. You just have to understand people’s attention spans, given the medium. If you’re writing something online, especially, it needs to be short and engaging. People look at a web page for an average of thirty seconds. That is not a lot of time to communicate information. So don’t waste it; have a focused point or a way to reach them right away.”

Chris Rose quotes Des Wilson: *The bigger the audience, the simpler the message*. Rose observes that “with public media, messages need to become simpler, compared with the complexities you can deal with in conversations at home or in the office.”[60]

You can still use context, as Sara Falconer notes: “We’re trying to tell more personal stories. We’re trying to speak to people in understandable chunks. That doesn’t mean we can’t run long pieces, but they need introductions, they need to be broken up to be readable and understandable, and to avoid jargon.”

Messages need to be clear and direct so they aren’t distorted, especially in the media. Chris Rose advises framing issues in terms of either/or. “A yes/no, ‘binary,’ presence/absence, black/white, either/or type of proposition is more compelling than a matter of degree, such as a how-much or a bit-less. It is more useful and robust, invulnerable to differing perceptions of ‘how much is enough.’ . . . A supporter can see there can be a clear end point.”[61] *Polarization*, here, is an effective way to mobilize and communicate.

“Stop the mega-quarry” is a clear, either/or proposition. Such arguments are hard to water down or distort, and harder for those in power to co-opt. Rose writes: “They are also news-proof. News polarizes, reduces, clarifies, crystallizes, sensationalizes. Remember the old news dictum: first simplify, then exaggerate. Put grey stuff into the news machine and it comes out black and white. Put a qualified, gradualist or multi-component campaign proposition into the news” and it will be rendered incomprehensible.[62]

Highly sophisticated and nuanced arguments don't translate well to mass media or general outreach. Rose suggests: "Focus on the small part that is unacceptable to most."[63] In a campaign against patriarchy, "stop rape culture" would be a good example.

Rose also suggests that activists "present only one problem at a time. Too many injustices at one time are indigestible. They can induce a state of denial, a mental and moral retreat . . . because of the impossibility of taking action on them. In fund-raising, the usual rule is only to offer one action, at several different levels: typically three ways of doing the same thing. Too many options can induce indecision."[64]

In a campaign it is ideal to have a clear antagonist. And, as Alinsky advises, the best antagonist is a person or a few people, rather than an abstract system or a bureaucracy. Zeroing in on *people* rather than systems makes it hard for the people responsible to diffuse responsibility, and easier to concentrate pressure.

Once you have clear points, repeat them over and over in different ways. In interviews it is more effective to repeat key ideas than to have a rambling conversation, bogged down in detail and diversions.

Silence = Death. This iconic graphic used by ACT UP was effective because of its simplicity and visual appeal.[65] It is eye-catching on its surface because of its readable white text and bright pink triangle against a black background. The simplicity also made it easy to use on posters, T-shirts, and buttons. But the simple graphic contains deep connotations. The pink triangle, used by the Nazis to mark gay people in the concentration camps, reminds us of the human cost of complacency in the face of horror.

Engage your audience with emotional and visual appeal. A hundred years ago, newspaper advertisements often listed the benefits of a product in large blocks of text. But successful advertisers learned that rational arguments were rarely as important as making an emotional impact

on the audience, appealing to them at a deeper level. A lot of radical propaganda hasn't caught up with this lesson.[66]

Visual slickness can make a big difference, as Sara explains: "At a book fair with a sea of literature in front of you, people go for the things that look nice and that appeal to them visually and emotionally right away. That's not coldly advertising for revolution; it's recognizing that people have been conditioned to like certain things."

Chris Rose suggests: "Almost every campaign is best conducted visually. Visuals give reach, accessibility and impact; modern technology has created an increasingly visual media world, and seeing, generally, is believing, because most people have an inbuilt preference for receiving information visually. . . . If you need to choose one medium, then it should be visual."[67]

He also suggests crafting campaigns and messages with big, strong, dramatic outcomes. These messages resonate in the mass media and they are better at mobilizing communities. People are more willing to make real sacrifices when the outcomes are larger.

He suggests that campaigns be inspiring or even heroic: "Drama holds our attention. . . . Yet so many campaigns are quite unlike that. Many seem unambitious, or simply an extended form of complaint: unexciting, uninspiring. Does your campaign excite you? If not, stop it and rework it until it does. Select your campaign from among the things that excite you, not the ones that you feel you ought to be seen to work on."[68]

Plan Colombia. Detail from an enormous poster by the Beehive Collective (beehivecollective.org). The impressive full-sized poster depicts neocolonialism and resistance in Latin America, using living creatures as stand-ins for resistance fighters, community organizers and consumers, among other things. An incredible level of detail allows Beehive Collective posters to serve as propaganda and educational tools as well as works of art.

Build trust and credibility. Often *who* says something is more important than *what* is said or how. Building a genuinely authentic and credible relationship with your audience is key.

Sara explains: “If you’re doing things in a genuine way, from a place of personal belief, and a very real way of talking, people are much more likely to listen. People are increasingly savvy about marketing-talk and can see through it.”

An important way to build credibility is to make sure that the people most affected by your campaign are included. It’s a key principle for the calendar and magazine Sara works on that the projects be prisoner-led. “Especially in terms of messaging for a campaign, you can’t be talking about prisoners or for prisoners without including them.” It’s not just a tokenistic inclusion, but actual collaboration.

Sara also emphasized to me that unique perspectives and personal stories from those people are critical. Voices that people haven’t heard before—or don’t usually hear—are both informative and more likely to attract listeners.

Repeated messages are also important in building trust and an ongoing relationship. Someone reading a newsletter or a blog online might not act on it right away. But steady contact over time will make people more likely to act in the end, Sara explains. (And repetition is at the core of any propaganda, good or bad.)

Respect for the audience is also key. If you are contemptuous of your audience and their concerns that will show, and it will drive them away. If you want people to listen to you, you have to listen to them.

You can also build credibility with an appropriate level of professionalism and good conduct. (That doesn't mean dressing in business casual; if your campaign is about farm issues, someone wearing overalls might seem more credible than someone in a suit.) And if you want to be taken seriously, Sara strongly suggests editing for grammar and spelling: "If I can't proofread, I don't want to be part of your revolution!"

Set your own frames; don't argue on the adversary's terms. Since frames are "story shortcuts," triggering a well-worn frame can make the audience mentally jump to the end of an argument.

Sometimes this is good; if you see a news story about a dispute between an aging grandmother and a big bank, you may mentally side with the grandmother immediately. This response can help rally people against injustice. As Chris Rose writes, that mobilization "rarely involves changing minds. More often, it works through new applications of existing beliefs, perceptions and motivations."[69]

Very often, though, such media tropes are an obstacle to change. Reporters often frame protests using an *overemotional-crowd-vs-rational-people-in-suits* framing. And once that is in play, many audience members will discount anything protesters say in interviews.

Rose argues: "Triggering the frame is more important than defining a particular message or argument. Once a frame is established—for example in an interview or other communications episode—attempts to argue against it are doomed."[70]

Instead of *rational-vs-emotional*, struggles for justice are better served by a *fair-vs-unfair* or *ethical-vs-unethical* frame.

Rose explains: “To succeed you usually need to win hearts as well as minds. The usual failure is not winning hearts. Many campaigns about the ethics of public good are disabled by a common strategy of the public affairs industry, which is to invoke the ‘rational-not-emotional’ frame, and so avoid the ‘ethical-or-unethical’ frame.”[71]

Consider a hypothetical TV debate on oil pipelines:

> TAR SANDS INDUSTRY FLACK: Oil pipeline spills are very rare. I understand that some people have a knee-jerk reaction against them, but the truth is that oil pipelines are the safest way to transport petroleum, when compared with alternatives like railroad tankers.

Note how they invoked the frame of “rational” vs “knee-jerk” emotional response. The bounds of this argument are so tight that the “alternatives” are not wind or solar energy, but railroad tankers of oil. We could respond by arguing within that frame, using facts to challenge this “rational” high ground:

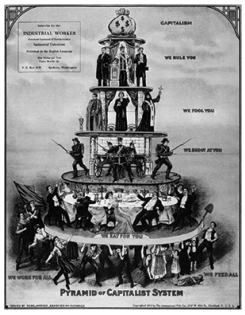
> ORGANIZER A: Oil spills are much more common than they would have you believe. Further, the particular pipeline we are discussing is poorly maintained and has a wall thickness of only ¼ inch, whereas newer pipelines have a thickness of ½ inch or more.

Now, that may all be true, but if that’s everything we have to offer, we’ve lost the argument. Instead of mobilizing a powerful opposition movement, we’re going to be sidetracked into the territory of “experts”—a discussion of metallurgy and maintenance schedules that is well within the comfort zone of our “rational” opponent.

Instead we should short-circuit this frame, and confront them on the moral ground, where we have the advantage:

> ORGANIZER B: Oil spills are terrible, but they're only part of the problem. The tar sands are being exploited on Indigenous lands, without permission, and sacrificing the health of Indigenous peoples. Meanwhile, the tar sands are worse for global warming than any other energy source. How that oil is transported is beside the point. The bottom line is that it's morally unacceptable to exploit the tar sands at all.

Facts *plus* feelings will get us where we want to go.



Pyramid of Capitalist System. Another classic IWW poster shows the pyramid of capitalism on a wedding-cake-style pyramid. It's visually appealing and clear. Succinct text at each layer makes relationships clear from top down: "We rule you. / We fool you. / We shoot at you. / We eat for you. / We work for all. / We feed all."

Mobilize for action. The end goal of resistance outreach isn't to spread yet another ideological monologue. It's to get people to *do* things. Chris Rose: "Campaigning involves stimulating action, best achieved by narrowing the focus and eliminating distractions. . . . Education leads to confusion. Campaigning leads to action."[72]

Sara explains: "There should *always* be a call to action. There should be a call to action in pretty much everything you do online. If you're sharing a piece of information, share what you want people to do about it. If you just want *them* to share it, say that. Sometimes just saying that is enough to get people to share it."

Even if you are in the preliminary stages of a campaign and just want to get attention, rather than to disrupt, holding an action or event is a great way to do that. Some campaigns I've worked on have bought advertising space. But events are usually better than arguments alone, and news coverage of an interesting event is cheaper and more credible than advertising.

Liberate Oakland and shut down the 1%. This powerful and succinct 2012 poster from Occupy Oakland has a lot going for it. Its red-and-black design is sharp and eye-catching. In a single graphic it evokes liberating raised fists and—through the handcuffs with dollar sign chain—the repression of capitalism. The classic style reminds viewers of mass mobilizations of the past. It avoids the "wall of text" political poster problem, in favor of highly economical text: only twelve words (a fraction of the length of a Twitter message). And it has a date for its call to action.

Measure success. So you've identified your goal, you've put out your posters and zines and TV interviews. Now ask: is it working?

If you have the resources, Chris Rose suggests getting professionals involved: "Done well by experienced moderators, qualitative research is expensive but well worth it. Cheap qualitative research, however, tends to be useless or, worse, misleading."[73] The problem, he notes, is that most people don't have a good conscious understanding of their own motivations, but a moderator with experience helps members of an audience to tease out why they are responding—or not—to your communications.

If you don't have the resources for that, it's still valuable to ask the questions. Sara says: "Every once in a while step back and ask 'are we doing this effectively enough?' Right now I would argue that we aren't, for the most part.

"[But n]ot just in communications. We generally need to do a better job of looking at the big picture and figuring out what our strategies are. If you think about demonstrations now, have our strategies really changed or

gotten smarter or improved based on learning in the past ten years? Do we still go to demos exactly the same way as we did ten, twenty, or thirty years ago? I think that's part of why I'm not drawn to going to demos; I don't find them particularly effective. It's theater."

Sara argues that we shouldn't get swept up in fads or change everything at once, but that we do need "to try new tactics and new strategies, and then really evaluate whether they are working."

PRACTICAL OUTREACH AND THE MEDIA

When preparing for a campaign or major action, consider your communications strategy. What is your communications objective? Who is your audience, what will resonate with them, and what do you want them to know, feel, or do? How will you reach them, and with what messages or content?

You can start by drafting a simple set of talking points or messages that can be applied across different media and used repeatedly. You can also draw on them in interviews or tabling or regular conversation. Not all your messages should be text, of course. Chris Rose suggests that a successful media campaign is one where the winning outcome could be expressed as an image or photograph.

Your talking points might include:

- **Headline:** The central message of your campaign (What would you want to see as a newspaper headline or on a placard?)
- Three or four **arguments** for your main point (along with a fact or two to back each one up)
- Some supporting **anecdotes or stories**.[74]

Remember that there's a difference between your *communications strategy* and your group's internal strategic goals or reasons for action.

Maybe your ultimate goal is to abolish capitalism or the prison-industrial complex, but that's probably not your communications headline for a particular action or campaign. You want to find the points of leverage that will engage people so you can bring them along for your campaign and build an ongoing relationship.

In the first volume of this book I wrote about our campaign to keep farming programs open at prisons in Canada. Our emphasis changed through the campaign, but the main talking points could be boiled down like this:

- **Headline:** Prison farms should stay open because they benefit our communities.
- **Argument 1:** The farms benefit prisoners and our communities. (Fact: Former prisoners tell us that working with animals helped them cope with prison and to adjust to daily life once they were released.)
- **Argument 2:** Prison farms help our community to feed itself. (Facts: The prison farm in Kingston is the largest urban farm in North America, and with rising oil and food costs we need to protect that farmland.)
- **Argument 3:** The federal government is ignoring public opinion and democracy. (Facts: Public opinion surveys are strongly in favor of the farm. The ruling Conservative Party has been censured for lying about budget issues already.)
- **Argument 4:** The prison farms are being closed to usher in an American-style system of mega-prisons. (Fact: Mega-prisons and "tough on crime" legislation will funnel millions of taxpayer dollars into private hands, and will make our communities less safe.)

That last argument is an important example. Appealing to a community identity—in opposition to an antagonist—is a very effective way to galvanize people. Canadians are often sensitive to being overrun by aggressive American culture, so reminding them of values thought to be Canadian as opposed to American is one way to invoke existing frames and attitudes in a helpful way.

Interviews or face-to-face conversations present different challenges. Memorize your talking points so that you can fall back on them regardless of what happens. Remember that interviews are often edited down quite a bit, so you may only get a sentence or two in a final broadcast or article. Make your key points as soon as possible, and repeat or reinforce them in different ways. If you give the interviewer extraneous material or digressions, they might use that instead of what you want them to use. Stay on message: Don't give them the option of selecting off-topic or less-than-ideal quotes.

Common advice says that in an interview you should answer the question you *want* to get, rather than whatever the reporter asks you. This is fine, but try to *bridge* smoothly from the actual question to the answer you want to give so you seem more composed and professional.

In addition to bridging, practice *reframing* the issue, and try to anticipate the kinds of questions you'll get. Consider the common frames journalists use and the frames that your antagonists use, and be ready to change them. In his book *How Nonviolence Protects the State*, Peter Gelderloos gives a typical example of an activist accepting dominant frames (and being defensive) in an interview:

> REPORTER: What do you have to say about the windows that were smashed in today's protest?
>
> PROTESTER: Our organization has a well-publicized nonviolence pledge. We condemn the actions of extremists who are ruining this protest for the well-meaning people who care about saving the forests/stopping the war/halting these evictions.[75]

Instead, Gelderloos argues that interviewees should reframe while going on the offensive, like this:

REPORTER: What do you have to say about the windows that were smashed in today's protest?

PROTESTER: It pales in comparison to the violence of deforestation/the war/these evictions. [Insert potent facts about the issue.][76]

Stay focused on what you want to communicate to your *actual* audience—the interview is ultimately a conversation with *them*, not with the reporter. Reframe questions, but avoid debates, arguments, or digressions. It's almost impossible to win debates because the reporter always has the last word and can edit your statements to make you appear antagonistic or unreasonable.

It's normal to be a bit nervous about giving interviews, even if you have experience. Practice and preparation is the best way to deal with this. (See sidebar.)

If you want to use the mass media effectively, don't just send out press releases. Develop relationships with actual journalists. The number of journalists working for the corporate press continues to dwindle, but they exist—and so do a large number of independent journalists using the internet to reach a large audience. When you develop relationships with journalists they are more likely to give you press when you need it, and they develop a better understanding of the issues, so they may present your story in a more nuanced or sympathetic manner. (But—especially if you don't know them—don't assume that a sympathetic journalist will end up producing a sympathetic report once it is churned through the machine of producers, editors, and de facto corporate censors.) Journalists can also be sources of information for you.

Understand what you can and can't get out of the mass media. Remember that, as a resistance group, those in power (which includes those who own and run the corporate media) are not your friends. They

understand that. Getting neutral news coverage (as opposed to smear pieces) is often the best you can hope for. (That said, consider what P. T. Barnum said: there's no such thing as bad publicity.)

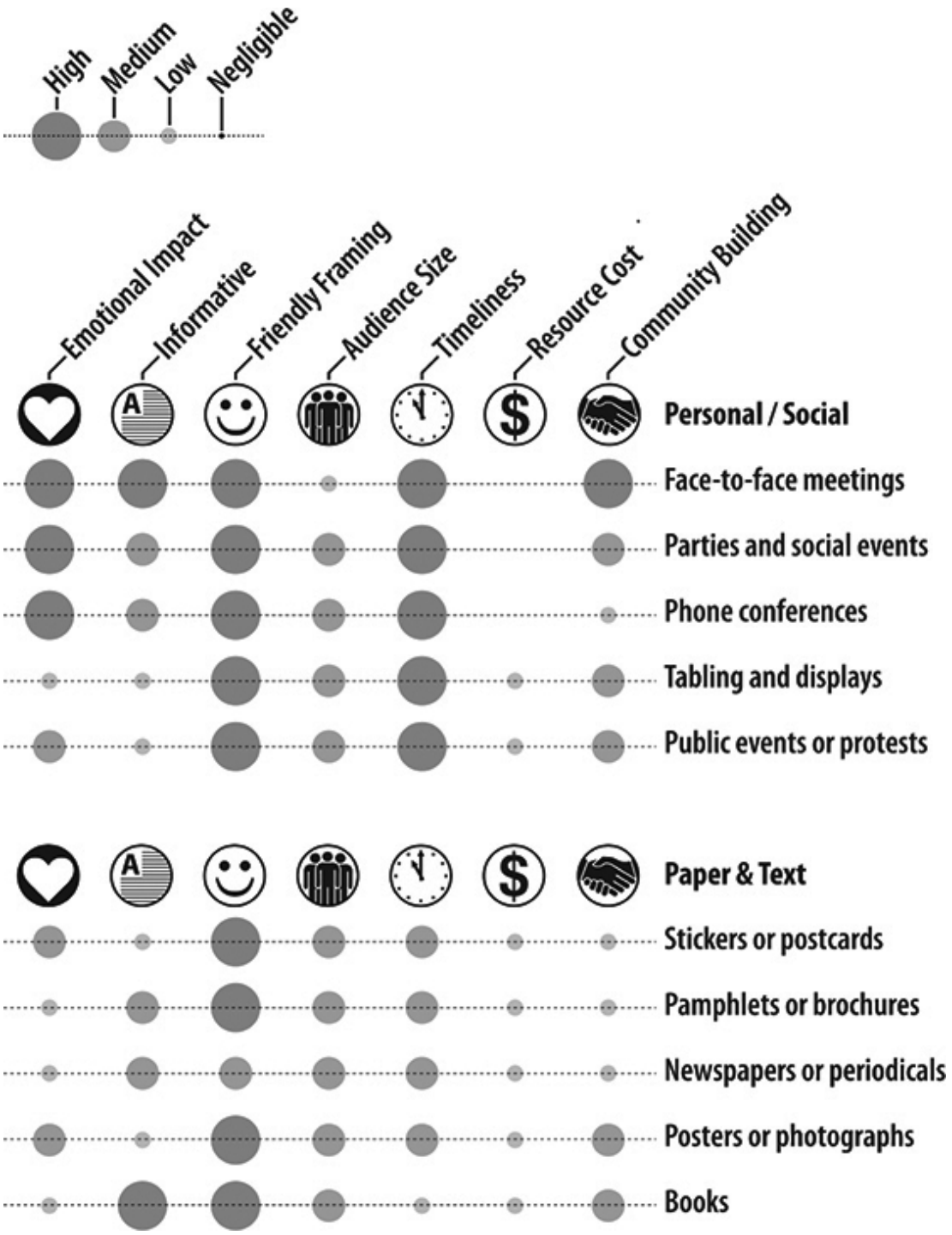
In making a communications strategy, you'll probably want to pick and choose from the channels available to accomplish your goal. Every kind of media has its own benefits and drawbacks for organizing:

- *How much emotional impact does it have?* Personal and visual communications usually have the most emotional impact on the audience. That's necessary to make a strong, visceral connection, and to mobilize people to take action.
- *How informative is it?* Some media channels are inherently good at carrying large amounts of information—longer text, direct conversation, and to some degree the internet. Posters or videos are better off carrying small amounts of information, broadcast or repeated more widely.
- *Is the framing friendly?* You can reach a lot of people in the *New York Times* or on CNN, but the story probably won't be framed in a way that's friendly to resistance. Media with less friendly framing are best when the goal is to get a simple, less corruptible message to a large number of people. Friendly framing can be ensured when your group makes the material—or when you have the conversation—directly.
- *How large is the audience?* One-on-one conversation is a slow way to make the revolution. Sometimes you need a larger audience size to reach out to, depending on your goal. Even the corporate media can be used to drive people in a larger audience to your own channels of communication.
- *Do you need quick and timely communication?* Books are lovely if you want to be very informative but don't mind waiting a year or two for your message to hit the printing press. Actually organizing and mobilizing people usually calls for more timely methods (including email, social media, and personal contact).
- *What's the resource cost?* Having a conversation or a small meeting is basically free, much like texting or sending an email. Commissioning an entire film is expensive. What do you have the resource budget for?
- *What is the potential for community building?* You don't want to just transmit a message. If you want to build an effective

movement you need to get new people and form them into communities of resistance. This means potential for two-way conversation, emotional impact, and the ability to bring people together for action and discussion (even if just for a book club).

In figure 7-1 I've charted (in *very* approximate terms) the general potential each kind of media has to realize each of these criteria.

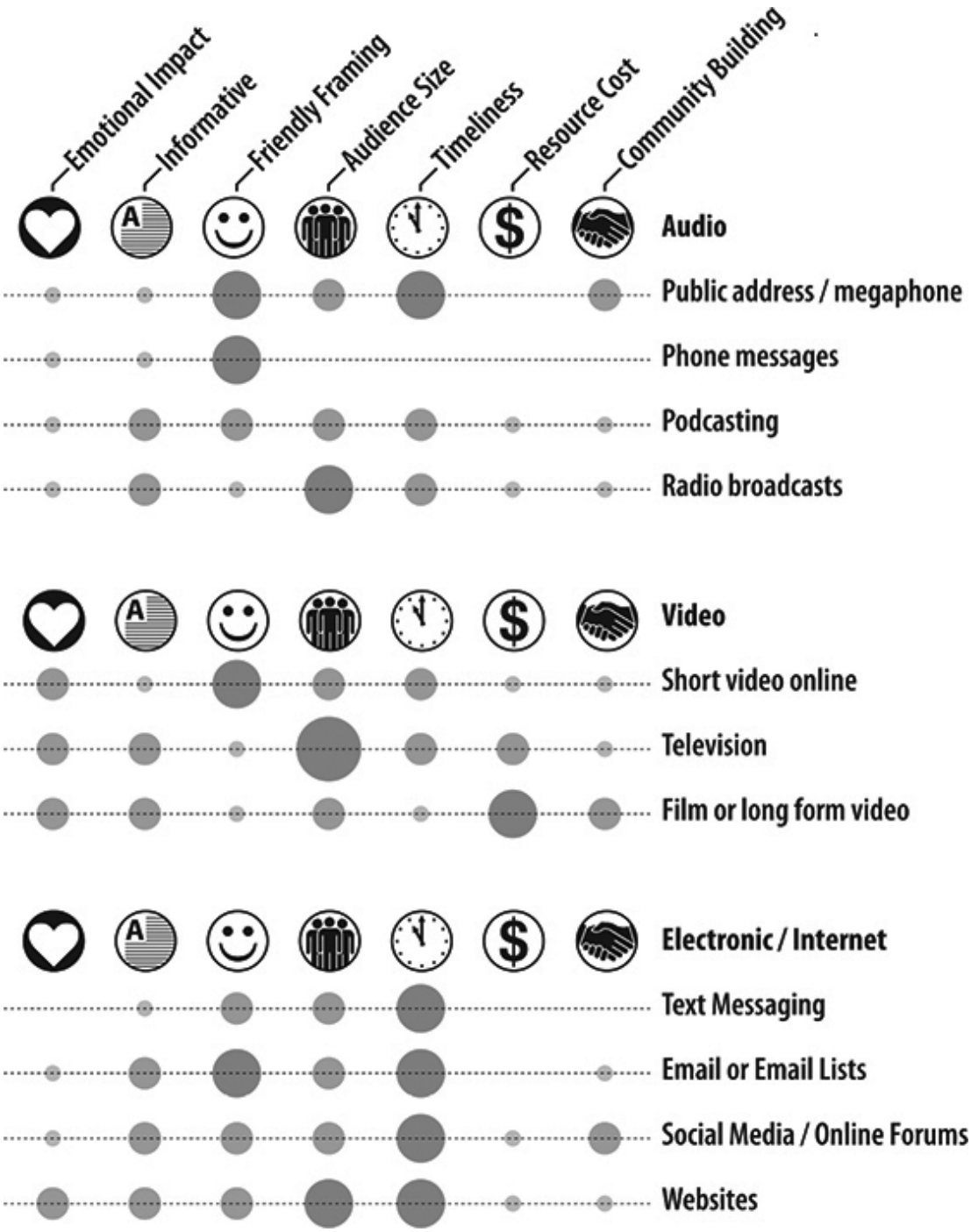
Certain modes of communication are good for certain things. Face-toface communications are key for building strong ties and core communities, especially early on when a group has limited resources. The particular way you communicate messages depends on your immediate goals. Do you want to reach a bunch of people quickly and cheaply? Use a phone tree or electronic message. Do you need to make an emotional impact on more than a handful of people? Consider photography or a YouTube video.



7-1: Communications methods at a glance

I believe face-to-face relationships are the root of all organizing. We can use electronic communications for organizing and mobilization, but to *supplement* personal and community relationships, not to replace them.

Mass broadcast communications like TV are alluring because of their enormous audiences, their spectacular and slick appeal. But—Greek uprisings aside—television channels are controlled by large corporations unfriendly to resistance. And they can twist our message and our movements.



Practicing for Interviews

In a Resistance School I taught with my colleagues Pamela Cross and Matt Silburn, we trained people by having them write up talking points for an imaginary (or real) action. Then we had volunteers go to another room for one minute "television" interviews that we recorded on a video camera. To make things more interesting, we threw antagonistic questions at them that had little to do with the subject. Their challenge was to see how much they could get across in sixty seconds.

Then we watched the videos as a group to learn and give feedback. It's surprisingly difficult to communicate what you want to get across in one minute, especially when the interviewer is cutting you off or changing the subject. Recording practice interviews is useful to help people pay attention to body language, tone of voice, pacing, and other things you usually aren't aware of without recording and analyzing them. (Remember why you are talking to the media and use the appropriate tone, word choice, and body language. If you are trying to get a message out or mobilize people, you probably want to be polite and friendly, but assertive. If you are trying to send a message to those in power that you are serious, you may want to be less friendly and perhaps even directly confrontational.)

If you still don't feel confident enough after practicing, it's OK to turn down a request for an interview, or to direct a reporter to someone else. (A really bad interview can be worse than no interview at all.)

This is why Jerry Mander warned against it in *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*; TV has an emotional impact, but often by bypassing our critical thinking faculties and at the expense of being

informative. That makes it easy to suppress dissent even as people watch protests on TV.

Katerina, a Greek student, said of the December 2008 uprisings: “I thought the revolution was coming, I really did! . . . But in December I learned that the TV is the most powerful weapon they have. The most important. It’s the only one they need. To make people afraid, to make people stay home, to misinform people, to turn people back against the revolution. Now I think everyone has gone back to their old lives, to the normal way of doing things, thanks to the TV.”[77]

The internet, too, is a double-edged sword. It has enormous potential for direct mass communications and mobilization on a scale that historical movements could never have imagined. But it has its own pitfalls and limitations.

During the “Arab Spring,” internet utopians clamored to give the web credit for a growing resistance spirit. They even dubbed Egypt’s uprising “the Twitter Revolution.” That might make sense if Twitter is your only source of information about movement organizing. But it ignores the long history of social movement organizing on the ground. (Indeed, the buzz about Iran’s “Twitter Revolution” was not so much from organizers inside as inflated rhetoric from outside the country.)[78]

In contrast, Noam Cohen in the *New York Times* warned: “The mass media, including interactive social-networking tools, make you passive, can sap your initiative, leave you content to watch the spectacle of life from your couch or smartphone.”[79] And scholar Navid Hassanpour argues that the shutdown of the internet in Egypt actually accelerated revolutionary mobilization, because it forced people to organize in decentralized, face-to-face groups—to get involved rather than just watch things.[80]

Another criticism of internet-based activism comes from Malcolm Gladwell. In his essay “Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted,” Gladwell compares historical organizing in the civil rights movement with

online activism like joining Facebook groups. Gladwell argues that only face-to-face communities can form strong ties—which I talked about a few chapters ago—and that Facebook groups will not produce the relationships people need to risk and sacrifice and struggle with each other.

I asked Sara Falconer what she thought about this. She told me that the internet was just one of many tools: “You can use them effectively—or not. It’s not that the revolution lives online or that your Facebook status is really accomplishing something. They’re incredibly effective tools in terms of getting information out to people, in terms of reaching audiences you wouldn’t be able to reach otherwise.

“It’s like saying this pamphlet you wrote isn’t organizing the revolution. Well, of course, this piece of paper isn’t in and of itself doing anything. Conversely, saying the printing press didn’t have a revolutionary impact is kind of ridiculous. You can use tools to shape what is happening in society. For us to have this way of communicating to each other on a quite large scale for very little money has incredible potential for us.”

LUSSEYRAN & DÉFENSE DE LA FRANCE

Secure communication is the linchpin of underground organizing. Underground groups need safe and trustworthy communication if they are to recruit members, plan actions, and gather intelligence. Without the required capacity methods, individual dissidents will remain isolated, lonely, and ineffective. And if underground movements can’t share information about what they are doing and why, they too will remain marginal.

For those who work underground, two key questions are: “Who can we trust? And how can we share stories of our struggle with potential

sympathizers?" Some answers to both questions come from the French Resistance, and particularly from the story of resister Jacques Lusseyran.

When Lusseyran was just a child, two things happened. In Germany, the Nazis came to power. And in a terrible accident, Lusseyran was blinded, losing his sight completely. Jacques began to perceive more keenly with his other senses, especially hearing. As he would explain in his memoir, *And There Was Light*, he learned to tell by voice whether people were lying, and to derive character from the tone and cadence of their speech. "What voices taught me they taught me almost at once. . . . If I was deceived by them it was never for long."[81]

He called the melody of voice "a moral music. Our appetites, our humors, our secret vices, even our best-guarded thoughts were translated into the sounds of our voices, into tones, inflections or rhythms. Three or four notes too close to each other in a sentence announced anger, even if nothing made it visible to the eye. As for hypocrites, they were recognizable immediately. Their voices were tense, with small abrupt intervals between sounds, as though the speaker were determined never to let his voice go its own way."[82]

Lusseyran developed close friends who helped him navigate the halls of his school and the streets of Paris. When they went to the theater, his friends would whisper terse descriptions of the action on stage. Their group took care of each other, and since he might depend on them to safely cross a busy street or take the bus, they developed strong ties of mutual trust.

But their cheerful group was threatened by the rise of fascism in Europe. On the eve of the war, Lusseyran took a trip to Germany with his father and began to learn how bad things had become, how immanent the outbreak of mass destruction was. "When we got back to Paris, naturally I played the prophet to my companions. Almost without exception they failed to understand. In their families they heard nothing out of the ordinary. There had always been incidents, and always would be."[83]

He was infuriated by this willful ignorance, and the way most of the adults in his life clung to “bourgeois comfort”:

> From my point of view, this refusal to face reality was the stupidest thing I had met in my thirteen years. For my companions and their parents, I was ashamed. If I had only known how, I would have made them understand.
>
> Most grownups seemed to be either imbeciles or cowards. They never stopped telling us children that we must prepare for life, in other words for the kind of life they were leading, because it was the only good and right one, of that they were certain. No, thank you. To live in the fumes of poison gas on the roads in Abyssinia, at Guernica, on the Ebro front, in Vienna, at Nuremberg, in Munich, the Sudetenland and then in Prague. What a prospect!

Some of his peers “declared themselves patriots. Not I. I had no desire to be like them, for they were all braggarts, and not one made the slightest effort to understand what was going on. Besides, inside their anti-German families, it was amazing how indulgent they were toward Hitler and his crimes.”[84] Lusseyran was correct. It was not long until Hitler controlled much of Europe, France along with it.

Living under occupation, he writes, “each morning we woke up having lived weeks, though we didn’t know how, since the day before.”[85] He decided it was time for him to start a resistance movement. “At the beginning of May [1941] I had adopted the ascetic way of life which befits a soldier of the ideal. Every day, including Sunday, I got up at half-past four before it was light. The first thing I did was to kneel down and pray” and then to wash in cold water.[86]

He and his friends quietly called a recruitment meeting. They expected perhaps ten people to come; instead fifty-two crammed into an apartment,

young men between sixteen and twenty years old. “So long as people thought of us as kids, they would not suspect us, at least not right away.”[87] Immediately they began to construct their underground organization. Although they were young and inexperienced, they quickly put in place most of the underground security and organization measures I’ve already written about.

First, to the new group, he said “there was no turning back from their commitment. They would not be able to close the door they had opened that night. What we were making, they and I together, was called a Resistance Movement.”[88] And he spoke to each person differently: “Some I was encouraging. Others I was calming down.”[89] But he also understood that half of them might drop out in the first two months, and that they couldn’t properly assess their numbers—or consolidate their organization—until after that “trial period.” After that there could be no dropping out, because they would be under a kind of “martial law.”

Second, they created a firewall. Outside their cells, “nothing that meant anything must be discussed. Starting that very evening we must lead a life divided right down the middle, on one side the life of innocent young people, open with their families, their teachers, their classmates . . . on the other side the other life.”[90]

They also began to crudely compartmentalize their (already dangerously large) organization, and took care to avoid hasty mistakes. “For the first six months, for a year if need be, our resistance would be passive while we were preparing the way. First we would proceed to set up the cells of the Movement, one at a time. There would be no appeal from this rule. The meeting of the fifty-two had been madness, not deliberate of course, and perhaps necessary, but it would be the last. From now on the members of the Movement must never meet more than three at a time, except in serious emergencies.”[91]

And they encouraged a strict realism and caution. “In the preparatory stages, all childish dreams must be thrown away without pity, all those dreams of cloak-and-dagger, those dreams of conspiracy and guerrilla war. Until new orders were issued, there would be no arms in the Movement, not even a single hunter’s gun. And there would be no talk of arms.”[92]

They called themselves “The Volunteers of Liberty” and set up a central committee to organize their movement. Lusseyran was given charge of recruiting, and was to use his keen sense of falsehood and character to screen candidates. “That was my job, my specialty. They claimed I had ‘the sense of human beings.’ In my first encounters I had made no mistakes. Besides, I would hear more acutely and pay better attention. People would not easily deceive me. I should not forget names or places, addresses or telephone numbers. Every week I would report on the outlook without resorting to scraps of paper or lists. Everything written down, even in code, was a risk that none of us had the right to run.”[93]

When a new candidate (perhaps a classmate) was identified, one of the original fifty-two would watch that person for days or weeks. If that candidate was thought trustworthy, they would send him to “the blind man.” Lusseyran didn’t say his name, and they didn’t ask. “The rules were strict. I was never to receive individuals whose coming had not been announced. And I was not to receive them unless they arrived within five minutes of the appointed hour. If their coming did not meet these conditions, and if I was unable to send them away—a difficulty which was very likely to arise—I would ask them in, but, pretending there had been a misunderstanding, we would talk of nothing that mattered.”[94]

When interviewing candidates he did not have a simple routine or plan. Nor did he go straight to the matter at hand, but went through a series of seemingly unrelated preliminary conversations, putting the burden of conversation on the candidate. The candidate had to fill the silences. In this way, he learned more about their character and their psychology than he

would have by running them through a rote interview.[95] Each week he would summarize his decisions for the central committee; who was admitted unconditionally, who was “on probation” (under surveillance) and so on.[96] In less than a year, he screened six hundred people. Lusseyran was very good at what he did. (He would make only one mistake, but that one would prove very costly.)

At the same time as they recruited and enlarged the movement, they created an underground newspaper to spread the truth about the war to the French people. “Never forget that in those days in the middle of 1941, most of our compatriots, and almost the whole of Europe, had lost hope. The defeat of the Nazis seemed improbable at the least, or postponed to an indefinite future. It was our duty to declare, to cry out our faith in the victory of the Allies. News was needed, surely, but courage even more, and clarity. We were resolved to hide nothing. For here was the monster to be fought: defeatism, and with it that other monster, apathy.”[97]

Even putting out their news bulletin was an enormous risk and a huge logistical challenge. The sale of blank paper was controlled by the state, so in order to get enough for their bulletin they had to steal it. And the mimeograph machine they used for printing was terribly loud. They convinced a psychiatrist to give them access to a padded cell in a psychiatric institution, where the printing noise could not be overheard.[98]

Recruitment was difficult, especially among people who were older than they. “The evidence stared us in the face. The men over thirty round us were afraid: for their wives and their children—these were real reasons; but also for their possessions, their position, and that is what made us angry; above all for their lives, which they clung to much more than we did to ours. We were less frightened than they were. The years ahead would prove the point. Four-fifths of the Resistance in France was the work of men less than thirty years old.”[99] Though he may be right about age, Lusseyran here is ignoring the contribution of women to the anti-fascist resistance, which was detailed

(among other places) in Ingrid Strobl's fantastic book *Partisanas: Women in the Armed Resistance to Fascism and German Occupation (1936–1945)*. The work of the large number of women in the resistance was absolutely essential.

But not all young people were eager to resist. In the highest academic levels of their school, "out of ninety boys we had found only six, counting Jean and me, who had agreed to enlist in the Resistance. The others never even considered it, some people of moral laziness; . . . others because of the disease that often goes with an overdeveloped intelligence, the inability to choose; others because of bourgeois selfishness, even at nineteen; still others because they had cold feet. Finally, and most painful of all, there were the ones who had chosen the other side."[100]

The general population wasn't much better. When they distributed their news bulletin, they were less afraid of secret police than of everyday collaborators.

> Disagreeable as it might be, it was necessary to swallow the bitter pill. Half of Paris was made of people of this sort. Their intentions were not criminal. They would not have hurt a fly as the saying goes. But they were protecting their families, their money, their health, their position, their reputation in the apartment house. To them we were terrorists, and they did not hesitate to say so. They talked about it among themselves, on the doorstep and over the telephone. If only we had not had them to reckon with. But they were worse than the Gestapo. . . . They would denounce us without giving a second thought.[101]

In spite of their fears and in spite of danger they kept working and organizing. They made contact with farmers and other rural people to establish training camps in the countryside.[102] They began to assist with

escape lines, and forged false papers.[103] Soon their movement merged with the larger and more professionalized Défense de la France.[104]

Lusseyran himself continued with school, but was eventually barred from proceeding with higher-level studies. The occupational government, under the influence of Nazi eugenics, had issued a decree banning people with "defects" from certain professions.[105] The ableist decree targeted an enormous swath of people with disabilities and difference, from the blind to amputees to people whose noses were beyond a prescribed length. Because of the firewall necessary for underground movements, Lusseyran was unable to challenge the decree directly—it would draw too much attention to his aboveground persona. But he worked ever harder in the resistance.

One day, a man named Elio showed up at Lusseyran's apartment. Ominously, he arrived without having been summoned. For whatever reason, Lusseyran didn't follow his own rule to dismiss the man or feign ignorance. His senses failed him. "Something like a black bar had slipped between Elio and me. I could see it distinctly, but I didn't know how to account for it."

Lusseyran set aside his hesitations. Elio had already been involved with the resistance for a year. He had important skills and resources, he had connections in a region they wanted to expand into. He was exactly the kind of person they had been looking for (in retrospect, suspiciously so). But because of Elio's assets, the group overlooked their misgivings and let him in.

Elio was an informer; he gathered information about the group and then betrayed them to the Nazis. Dozens of key organizers, including Lusseyran, were arrested and interrogated. Many were tortured. Those who were not executed were sentenced to a slow death in the concentration camps. Lusseyran was sent to Buchenwald, but survived until liberation.

After the war, Lusseyran wrote his autobiography, and the *Défense de la France* newspaper transformed into one of the most popular daily

newspapers in the country. Lusseyran became a professor, and died in 1971.

There are a lot of lessons I take away from the story of Jacques Lusseyran and the Volunteers of Liberty. Among them is the necessity of great caution, and rigorous security, for those who communicate underground.

Those in power have the resources to make many major mistakes with little consequence. Underground resisters pay dearly for every error. People who want to win will learn from mistakes in history, rather than making them anew.

HOW UNDERGROUND GROUPS COMMUNICATE

Underground groups are totally dependent on safe and secure communication. That security is only as strong as the weakest link. If members of a group are sloppy or untrustworthy, even the best encryption in the world is useless. So all of the security measures discussed in previous chapters—firewalls, compartmentalization, careful screening—still apply.

But there are also specific communications tools that underground groups use. Good communications and intelligent security practices look less like James Bond and more like common sense. Elaborate schemes are vulnerable to human error; good security measures are usually simple, so that anyone can follow them even in times of stress.

Tools for secure communication include the following:

Face-to-face meetings. If you want to make sure a clear message is getting to the right person, what better way than a conversation? Electronic communication like email and phones are easily surveilled; face-to-face meetings may be safest for resisters in geographic proximity.

Like Lusseyran, good underground organizers *avoid writing things down* whenever possible. (Michael Collins of the IRA wrote almost nothing down, and traveled with a briefcase full of unrelated business papers.) That's not always easy, especially in a time when easy access to digital tools means that most people don't exercise their detail memory strongly. But there are exercises to improve memory. If something *must* be written down, organizers encode it, disguise it as something innocuous, and then carefully destroy it once it's no longer needed. (See Further Resources.)

Of course, underground resisters don't just meet at any old place. They are careful to arrange meetings where surveillance is unlikely. That means not in their own houses, or vehicles, or activist hangouts, or in front of a CCTV camera. It may mean in a park, or in a randomly rotating public place, or a nook in a library. (They may use specific surveillance countermeasures, as discussed in Further Resources.)

The disadvantage of a face-to-face meeting is that those meeting may be followed, and a link between them identified. If those people already see each other often—say that they are in the same cell or have a suitable cover story—it may make no difference. But if they need to keep more distance, they can use other techniques, such as the dead drop.

Dead drops. A dead drop (sometimes called a dead letter box) is a location used to covertly pass items between people without requiring them to meet. This can be a way of moving information or items across a firewall. People using a dead drop to communicate don't necessarily know each other's identity.

A dead drop could be almost any kind of container that offers reasonable concealment but looks unremarkable to passersby. A library book on a shelf, for example, or a locker in a changing room. (Some concealment devices are specially made to look like everyday items, such as hollow candles or books, or screw-top safes designed to look like soda

cans.) Even an email account or other file-storage repository online can act as a dead drop. There are items specifically designed for concealment that could be used, like “dead drop spikes,” large hollow spikes with a removable cap, that can be pushed into soft ground or shallow waterways. Containers with magnets can be used, so that a small package can simply be hidden on the underside of a metal shelf, or behind a radiator.

Dead drops are located in places where no attention is drawn to the people who access it. A busy location might help to hide the identities of the users who are disguised among the traffic. A more remote location is also an option, although the users of the dead drop can more easily be identified if someone knows the exact location, and the users would need a plausible cover story for going to that spot.

The use of dead drops has been made much easier by modern digital technology. During the Cold War, spies would use microfilm to pass on large amounts of hidden information. Commercially available memory cards have made this more straightforward. Secure Digital or SD cards are relatively cheap and have large storage capacities. MicroSD cards smaller than a fingernail and less than a millimeter thick can store many gigabytes and are tiny enough to be concealed almost anywhere.

Users of a dead drop need to have a prearranged signal of some kind to indicate when something has been left in the drop. If a source has something they would like to pass on, they can put the item in the dead drop, and then use the signal to tell their contact to go and pick up the item. This signal is something innocuous and commonplace in its appearance. It could be left somewhere online, such as a particular comment left on a particular blog, or an online classifieds listing. It could be a signal left in a physical place, perhaps near the drop itself, such as a marking in a restroom stall. It could be a particular lamp left on in a window, a potted plant or other item on a windowsill, blinds open or closed.

The dead drop is by no means a foolproof method of security. If one user of the dead drop actually wanted to expose the other, they could simply activate their prearranged signal and watch the dead drop until someone attempts to access it. Some degree of trust is required.

On occasion a “live” mailbox, staffed by a person, may be used. This would typically be a cover location or business that is frequented by many people, such as a magazine stand or other small business. The advantage is that the person staffing it can watch for surveillance and pass on messages or packages to the appropriate person. However, that person will come to know any resistance members they encounter, which poses a potential security risk.

Cutouts and couriers. A “cutout” is a go-between or intermediary who passes information between two parties—such as an intelligence source and an underground intelligence officer. Cutouts help protect the identity of those underground. Cutouts may pass on many different kinds of information or messages, including messages between cells or auxiliaries. Cutouts should be people who are not involved in illegal activities and who keep a low profile.

Like cutouts, couriers are people who move items or information for the underground. They are typically people who can move quickly and safely, perhaps because they have a job or routine that involves travel, perhaps because their cover makes them unlikely to fall under suspicion.

Sometimes a “dead” courier is used—someone who is carrying something for the resistance without actually knowing it. The advantage is that this person won’t be unduly nervous if stopped and interrogated, and doesn’t have any information to give up. The disadvantage is that it may be difficult to retrieve the package from them, or they may unexpectedly deviate from their route or accidentally discover or destroy the package.

Cutouts and couriers need a suitable cover. A traveling businessperson or journalist may need to move about and talk to many different people. Someone who runs a café or newspaper stand can talk to people of different backgrounds and classes and pass messages or small packages inconspicuously.

Prearranged signals and codes. Prearranged signals are the most basic—and potentially the most rapid and reliable—means of secure communication. These signals are planned in advance. There are a few different basic kinds of signals. Some are used in an emergency, like a warning to flee, or a request for aid. Some are used to coordinate actions or tactics that have been put in place already and simply need the go-ahead. Other signals may share specific kinds of information, such as indicating the success of a mission or answering a simple question. Such a signal could be an object placed in a windowsill, a classified advertisement with a specific wording, or a particular key phrase used in a conversation or email. Other signals can be more elaborate, provided their meanings can be memorized or securely listed.

Signals may sound innocuous or like nonsense. For example, on the evening of June 5, 1944, BBC radio broadcast the words (in French) "Eileen is married to Jo. . . . It is hot in Suez. . . . The compass points north. . . . The dice are on the table."[106] These signaled the immanence of D-Day and instructed the French resistance to blow up critical telephone exchanges, railways, and roads that could be used by German reinforcements. The BBC also broadcast innocuous-sounding "personal messages" to people like "Pierre in Lyons," where "Pierre" actually referred to a particular resistance cell.

Typically, these signals should only be used once. Reuse undermines the security of the system. For example, let's say the BBC had a personal message for "Pierre" like "don't forget Aunt Jo's birthday," and that night a telephone exchange was blown up in a suburb of Paris. If the Gestapo made

the connection, and the BBC broadcast the same message again, there might then be guards hiding by the telephone exchanges waiting to catch someone.

These signals have clear benefits for use in the situations described, but they also have obvious limitations. In order to send messages about unanticipated situations, or to send longer or more detailed messages, resistance networks need to use methods of cryptography.

Encryption and steganography. Encryption—the conversion of readable messages into inscrutable code—is very old. Ancient Greeks used ciphers to conceal their messages. World War II–era resisters used more complicated encryption along with Morse code.

Most modern-day encryption is done by computer. Hand-encryption is possible, but it's usually very slow and easy to break by computer, because computers are very good at the complicated math needed to encrypt and decrypt things. The exception is the one-time pad, which uses a set of truly random numbers to encrypt a message, and which humans can actually use. The problem with computer encryption is that most people can't trust their computers, which are stuffed with spyware at the best of times. You might have a great encryption program, but if your keystrokes are being logged by hidden FBI or NSA software it won't matter—the message will be recorded before it is ever encrypted.

Encryption can be effective; it can also be conspicuous. Encrypted messages look like strings of gobbledegook, seemingly random characters; nothing like a normal, aboveground communication. A more subtle approach is *steganography*, a method by which a secret message is hidden inside some other material. Steganographic software can conceal an encrypted message inside a digital file such as a photograph. The photograph could be put, for example, on the internet, available for anyone to look at. (There are techniques to try to identify files with hidden

information—steganalysis—but the contents of a properly encrypted message should still be safe even if located.)

Not all steganography is digital. In Britain, people used to poke pinprick holes underneath letters in the newspaper, such that the letters spelled out a message, and then send the newspaper to a friend. If you are an especially close reader, you may have noticed some apparent typographical irregularities in this chapter. They aren't accidental. (Hint, hint!)

Despite its shortcomings, it's good practice for everyone to use encryption, even aboveground. Unencrypted email can easily be read, like a postcard, at any point in its journey over various servers from sender to receiver. Encryption makes the job of surveillance harder for those in power and it means that when people *do* want to send more sensitive messages, it's not obvious. Encryption is not just for the underground.

Emergency backups and multiple layers. Resistance groups need backup methods of communication in case their other channels are shut down. Maybe someone misses a face-to-face meeting for a legitimate reason, maybe an encrypted message can't be read due to a technical error. What's the backup plan?

Sometimes backup plans are needed on a much larger scale. During the "Arab Spring" after internet service was shut down some groups fell back on ad hoc wireless networks—and even carrier pigeons—to send messages. Some insurgent groups in the Middle East have enough resources to lay their own fiber-optic cables.[107] Guerrillas around the world have used their own radio systems for decades.

Multiple layers of security can also make communications safer in general. Having a face-to-face meeting to pass over a USB stick full of important files can be better than emailing them. Encrypting those files is even more secure. Steganographically hiding those files inside of a video file is even more subtle.

Protect the system. Most modern cryptography is incredibly secure—to forcibly break an encrypted message might require a supercomputer to run for thousands of years. Which is why those in power won't bother trying to decrypt then directly. Humans are always the weakest link in the system. The safe underground communication system won't just hide the contents of a message, but the messengers themselves and their means of communication. Those in power can't decode a message if they don't know where the message is.

But decrypting a message is usually harder than just capturing a resister and torturing them until they tell what they know. The Nazis didn't just try to locate and kill resistance cells—they also tried to seize their wireless sets or force the wireless operator to collaborate so that they could penetrate resistance communication networks.

Resistance movements in occupied Europe used several different tricks to avoid this. One was the deliberate introduction of errors in the message, one called a "truth check" and the other a "bluff check." A typo on the seventh letter of a message might confirm that the sender was transmitting of their own free will; a truth check. A typo on the thirteenth letter, however, might indicate that the sender had been captured and was transmitting under duress; a bluff check.

Tragically, in at least one incident the bluff checks were ignored and numerous trained agents were sent into a Dutch resistance network codenamed "North Pole" that had been compromised and put under Nazi control. Eventually several captured members of this network escaped confinement and *walked* from the Netherlands to Switzerland. But when they arrived, Dutch diplomats put them in handcuffs, because a message from the Nazi-controlled wireless set claimed that the escapees had joined the Gestapo![108]

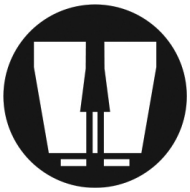
Another method was the use of special answers to innocuous questions. For example, a given cell might be sent the question "shall we send

cigarettes?" If the Nazis had seized the wireless set they might respond "please send cigarettes." However, this was a trick to expose the Nazi control; the correct answer to the question would be something like "Yes, I have met Aunt Ruth." Safe houses used a similar method by telephone. If a safe house operator said "yes, please come on down" it meant the police were present. On the other hand, if they said "sorry, we are busy tonight" that would mean it was okay to go to the safe house.

Next, we move on to another critical resistance capacity: intelligence and reconnaissance.

CHAPTER 8

Intelligence & Reconnaissance



"Ninety percent of war is having good intelligence; if you know where the enemy is and what he has, you can figure out how to deal with him."
—General Douglas MacArthur

IRA & BLOODY SUNDAY

Ireland, World War I. The Irish struggle for liberation is at a crossroads. Ireland has been occupied for centuries, but in the last fifty years it has regained a proud culture of resistance. It has won back much of its land through nonviolent struggle and noncooperation. But many feel that the struggle has reached the limit of what it can achieve through nonviolence when faced with a British occupier willing to use arbitrary imprisonment, torture, and murder against suspected resisters.

In April of 1916, the Irish Republican Brotherhood stages an uprising and seizes control of major government buildings in Dublin. But holding territory is hard for any movement, and the militants of the Easter Rising are swiftly defeated by the occupier's superior arms and training. Britain

hangs the leaders, and puts the rest into internment camps where the prisoners languish for years.

One of the survivors is a man named Michael Collins. He understands why the uprising failed, and the tactics that will be needed to win: not pitched battles, but hit-and-run tactics based on good intelligence, concealment, and boldness. He understands, especially, that the Irish resistance has been stymied by infiltrators and secret police. The secret police have been able to suppress the struggle for Irish independence by gathering information about its people and operations (in part by torturing prisoners).

As a leader of the original Irish Republican Army, Collins decides that the secret police and intelligence agents must be targeted, and with help from sympathetic insiders, Collins is able to identify them. He has them warned and intimidated at first, but those who continue to work for the British are beaten, or even assassinated. It works; the occupiers slowly lose their inside information on Irish resistance organizing.

In response the British escalate, sending in more paramilitaries and secret police. Michael Collins, who has built an incredible underground intelligence agency, helps resisters to avoid British agents.

By 1920, the situation is critical for the British. Public support for the Irish resistance is growing, and the British have very few Irish sources of intelligence to rely on. So they send in an elite group of British intelligence officers dubbed the “Cairo Gang.” It is the Cairo Gang’s job to find Michael Collins, to uproot the underground resistance, to see its organizers interrogated and hanged.

It’s make-or-break time for the original IRA. They painstakingly gather information about the Cairo Gang by intercepting letters in the post office, collecting discarded paper from wastebaskets, following informants, and grilling waiters, footmen, maids, and porters.[109] Soon they have a full picture of the squad, their activity, and their places of residence.

On the morning of Sunday November 21, IRA squads across Dublin strike simultaneously, bursting in on the surprised British officers and shooting them. The Cairo Gang is shattered. Most of them are killed—the survivors flee the country or go into hiding.

State retaliation is swift. Police descend on a busy Dublin football game and fire indiscriminately into a crowd of civilians and players, killing fourteen women, men, and children. Then they torture and murder three IRA prisoners. The Irish will remember this day for generations as Bloody Sunday. Only one of the IRA assassins is captured. He is sentenced to death, but escapes prison before he can be hanged.

The gruesome events of the day bolster Irish support for armed resistance. And with the British intelligence capacity broken, resisters of all kinds can organize much more freely. The struggle escalates, and within eight months the British are begging to negotiate Ireland's independence.

■ ■ ■

"Research is the engine of intelligence," explains Algonquin organizer Bob Lovelace, "and intelligence is the foundation of a successful movement."

Resistance movements are, by definition, outgunned. Those in power have overwhelming force; resistance movements win by applying the limited resources they *do* have in the right places. The resistance needs to know where those in power are most vulnerable and what the best targets are. It is good intelligence that allows resistance groups to understand *where* and *how* to apply force strategically.

In a 1977 communiqué, the underground George Jackson Brigade explained: "Good intelligence is the foundation of a successful guerrilla organization. The vast majority of intelligence work involves the gathering and organization of readily available pieces of information. Although this is mostly shit work, there is no way to overstate its importance."[110] These

words apply to any resistance movement, aboveground or underground, armed or nonviolent.

Serious intelligence capacity requires organization and hard work. In the 1996 film *Michael Collins*, a maid finds a list in a wastepaper basket which contains the names of everyone in the Cairo Gang, and gives it directly to Michael Collins. If only intelligence gathering were so simple. In reality, an entire underground intelligence department was required.

The process of building that department began much earlier, when Michael Collins was approached by a sympathetic police detective named Eamon Broy. Broy gave Collins a midnight tour of the headquarters of G Division (the police intelligence unit that investigated Irish resisters). Collins spent most of the night going through their records. As Michael T. Foy explains: “After five hours reading and note-taking, Collins emerged into the morning light a changed man whose questions had been answered, whose ideas had crystallised and who now knew what G-men knew—and did not know—about the republican movement. Having entered and toured his enemy’s mind, Collins was now in a position to create ‘his own G Division’—one that would emulate and finally outclass the original model.”[111]

Very soon, Collins had built a corps of trained intelligence personnel who gathered and analyzed enormous amounts of information. Far from a lucky find by a friendly maid, the compromise of the Cairo Gang was the result of an enormous amount of work and preparation. The IRA prepared dossiers on each target, recruited staff at the rooming houses where the British officers stayed, and even got copies of their room keys.[112] They conducted surveillance for weeks so that they were certain of who their targets were and where they would be; they wanted to avoid killing bystanders. A maid *did* assist in identifying several rooms used by members of the Cairo Gang, but nothing so dramatic as in the film.

The benefits of good intelligence—combined with good tactics—are beyond measure. M. R. D. Foot points out that sabotage in Nazi-Occupied France was more effective than aerial bombing, since the Special Operations Executive required fewer people and fewer resources for more impact. He explains that the "SOE succeeded in putting ninety factories completely out of production with a total load of explosives that was less than that carried by one light bomber."[113]

■ ■ ■

"So what is intelligence?" asked World War II intelligence officer and journalist Donald McLachlan. "Quite simply, it is information about the enemy. Not just any old information, any scrap of gossip, or rumor, but relevant information which has been processed and made as accurate as it can be."[114] He continues: "What then is the chief military function of intelligence, in peace as well as in war? I would say that its chief function is offensively to *achieve* and defensively to *avert* surprise."[115] In a broader sense, intelligence includes not just information about the enemy but about many other factors that affect the conflict: terrain, other factions, and so on.

Resistance intelligence is part research, part investigative journalism, and part espionage. And gathering intelligence is a job in which everyone can participate. The George Jackson Brigade suggested: "An important task for people who want to remain aboveground while participating in a supporting armed struggle would be to develop these skills.

- Start files on developing mass struggle[s];
- pay particular attention to the organization of the ruling class as it opposes them;
- investigate the police and strive to understand their strengths and weaknesses;
- develop target information: suggestions, terrain, weak spots, etc.;
- talk to the masses about armed struggle;

- publish the results of these investigations so that underground fighters and everyone else can see them."[116]

Perhaps this all seems abstract, or distant from the needs of resisters today. Let's sharpen our focus; for the rest of this chapter, we'll follow the thread of a nonviolent movement trying to stop a new oil pipeline.

THE INTELLIGENCE CYCLE

Imagine that we are organizers in a movement to stop the construction of an oil pipeline on Indigenous territory. What do we need to know to mobilize effective resistance? What kind of intelligence must we develop in order to win?

The US Marine Corps intelligence manual explains: "good intelligence is primarily the result of solid headwork and legwork, not the output of some secret process or compartmented database. . . . It is developed through the focused collection of information, thorough study, and, most importantly, effective analysis and synthesis. The result is an intelligence product that *provides knowledge*, *reduces uncertainty*, and supports effective decision making."[119]

Professionals use a multistep "intelligence cycle": information is collected, analyzed, packaged, and then distributed:

- **Direction and goals.** *What do we need to know to win?*
  Intelligence goals are based on overall strategic goals (and

strategy is guided by intelligence). Researchers and decision-makers collaborate to identify intelligence priorities.

- **Collection.** *Where can we find that information?* Use a variety of sources (from books to WikiLeaks to sympathetic insiders) to collect raw data.
- **Analysis.** *What information is most important, timely, and accurate?* Assess collected information for its accuracy, credibility, and importance. Look for contradictions and gaps in the research; try to create a whole picture of the situation.
- **Packaging and products.** *How can we package and share this intelligence?* Filing cabinets or hard drives overflowing with data are useless when timely decisions are needed; intelligence becomes valuable when it's assembled into warnings, reports, target lists, or other "intelligence products" (discussed below). That packaged intelligence must be sent to the right people in a timely fashion.
- **Use, evaluation, and feedback.** Intelligence is put into use and its real-world accuracy and utility are assessed. Resisters learn from good intelligence and from mistakes. Go back to the start of the cycle, and adjust their priorities and work accordingly.

Three Levels of Intelligence

After the African National Congress won its struggle against apartheid, member Ronnie Kasrils summarized his role in its underground intelligence operations: "As chief of military intelligence I supervised the gathering of information that would assist us in prosecuting the struggle against the State. We focused on security force command structures and personnel, deployment, battle order, strategy and tactics, bases and installations, communications, arms and equipment and state of morale.

"We also compiled information on the country's geography and terrain, power and communication network, the economy, the industrial and agricultural sectors.

“We gave special attention to border reconnaissance and developing infiltration routes home” from training camps outside of South Africa. “Cadres returning home were trained in collecting data and carrying out their own reconnaissance against the background of information and briefings given by military intelligence.”[117]

This is a good overview of typical resistance intelligence tasks. Kasrils touches on the three general levels into which military intelligence (and strategy) is often divided, which also apply to resistance organizing in general:

Strategic intelligence deals with the big picture. It includes information about political situations, economic systems, industrial infrastructure, communications and energy networks, notable people and organizations, technologies, and so on. Strategic intelligence helps resistance groups formulate, evaluate, and optimize their strategy, and gives members of the organization a better strategic context in which to operate.

Operational intelligence helps resistance groups plan and implement a particular campaign and major operations. Operational intelligence may help to identify potential targets or actions and evaluate which have the most value in moving the strategy forward. In the MK example, operational intelligence might focus on a particular campaign like the infiltration or exfiltration of cadres and trainees across the border, or on gathering area-specific information about the electrical grid of Johannesburg.

Tactical intelligence deals with specific units, targets or engagements at the most detailed level, such as direct reconnaissance. This may include gathering detailed information about potential targets. If the target is a physical installation, this may mean identifying the number of guards and their patrol routes, surveillance or camera equipment, entry and escape routes, weak points in the structure, and so

on. In the MK example, tactical intelligence might involve preparation to bring down a specific electrical pylon in a particular Johannesburg suburb.

Of course, there is no clear dividing line between these different levels. Instead, they overlap and work in concert.

Militaries may emphasize strategic intelligence so that they can mobilize huge armies and plan over the long term. Resistance movements, smaller and more agile, may emphasize tactical or operational intelligence so they can win short-term objectives to sustain themselves. That was the case for Michael Collins and the IRA. Foy writes: "Collins was indifferent to intellectual theories about intelligence or its ability to divine the enemy's long-term strategic intentions. He regarded its *raison d'être* as facilitating political and military action and was concerned only with intelligence's immediate and practical application to the Irish conflict."[118]

(If you want to use this as an exercise for yourself or your group, pause and answer the above questions for our hypothetical pipeline struggle, or another issue you are working on now. Otherwise, continue.)

In our movement against a pipeline on Indigenous territory, some of the answers will look like this:

- **Direction and goals.** *What do we need to know to win?* The anti-pipeline movement needs to know the proposed pipeline route, which companies want to build it, whose land it travels across, what the regulatory approval time line is, how other movements have fought similar projects, and much more.
- **Collection.** *Where can we collect that information?* We can start with regulatory applications by pipeline companies, Google Maps, news reports, corporate financial disclosures, oral histories, friendly pipeline experts, and many more.
- **Analysis.** *What information is most important, timely, and accurate?* We will have to cross-check different key facts (keeping in mind that companies will lie in their government

filings), prioritize information that will affect our strategy, and identify any urgent pieces of intelligence (for example, an excavation company plans to start exploratory digging in two weeks).

- **Packaging and products.** *How can we package this information in a useable form?* We might want to create things like: a map showing the route of the proposed pipeline, noting the Indigenous nations and ecological areas it would pass through; a time line of the regulatory approval process showing when and where we can most effectively intervene; a warning and call to action that people should mobilize immediately to stop a company from exploratory digging.
- **Use, evaluation, and feedback.** As the struggle proceeds and the situation changes, we can revisit our intelligence goals to make sure we have the right priorities, and continue the cycle.

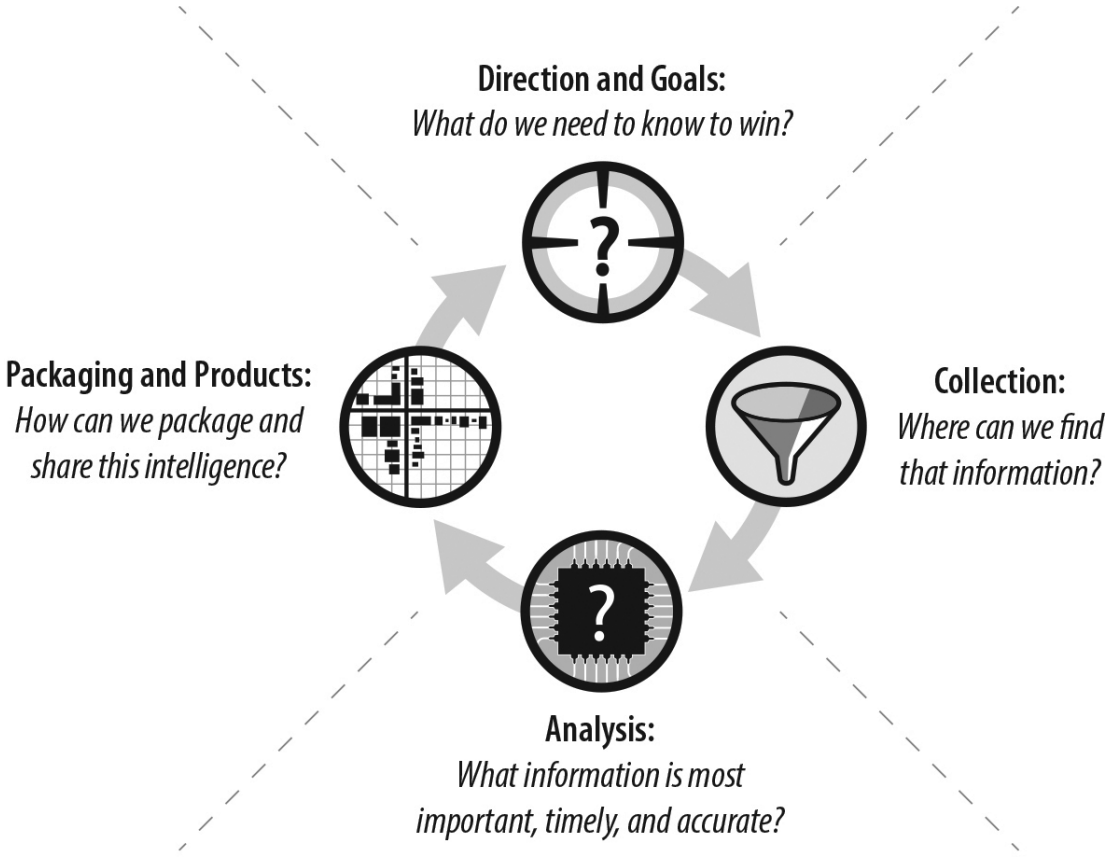

Direction and Goals:
What do we need to know to win?
Collection:
Where can we find that information?
Analysis:
What information is most important, timely, and accurate?
Packaging and Products:
How can we package and share this intelligence?

Figure 8-1: The Intelligence Cycle

In this example, especially, a lot of the key information can be collected either online or person-to-person. In general, as the George Jackson Brigade

alluded to, gathering intelligence is often much easier aboveground. (Almost everything is more difficult underground.) Aboveground allies can make things easier for underground movements by doing some of the work for them.

Intelligence gathering doesn't have to be a highly formalized process. The intelligence cycle is a useful conceptual guide, but resistance groups with limited resources and tight time lines—most of them—focus on their most important and urgent priorities. In small groups, intelligence workers may just share what they know in meetings and help guide planning, rather than writing formal briefings.

DIRECTION AND GOALS

The first question is "what kind of information do we need?" There are general *kinds* of research questions that can be asked (see sidebar of research questions), but the answer depends on our struggle.

Consider the case of uranium prospecting imposed on the Ardoch Algonquin (west of Ottawa) circa 2006. Robert Lovelace explains: "As a small indigenous community, Ardoch did not know much about uranium. Our first concerns were with a trapline and the failure of Ontario to consult. Research at the beginning stages allowed our community to expand its understanding of the history of uranium mining and the associated social, economic, and environmental consequences. We became knowledgeable and then capable of linking our concerns with the broader world. As well as

expanding our knowledge outward, we opened the bundle of traditional knowledge and found within the many coded layers of direct reference to our current situation and the language needed to express our concerns in universal terms."[120]

Next, consider what we need to know for our pipeline example.

We'll need to understand the regulatory process for approval. We need to know when and where public meetings are happening so we can bring public pressure to bear or even to disrupt phony "consultations." We'll need to know who is making decisions, who influences the decision-makers, and some information about their backgrounds. We'll need to know about the history of the process—is it a complete sham, and if so can we demonstrate that to the public?

We'll also want technical information about the pipeline, its planned route, and the people and companies building it.

We'll want to understand which places on the pipeline route are most suited to direct action, such as a blockade. We'll need to know which pipeline components and contractors are most important and most vulnerable to disruption. And so on.

Ultimately, resistance is about action, so we'll want to identify which tactics are best matched to stopping the pipeline, so we can build the skills, organization, and allies necessary to win. For example, NoDAPL chose a mass mobilization on Indigenous land at a crucial point on the route. Activists opposed to Ontario's Line 9, on the other hand, used technical information about the pipeline to locate safety valves that they could use to manually shut down the line.

COLLECTION AND INTELLIGENCE SOURCES

Once a group has determined the purpose and priorities of their intelligence efforts, they need to find their *sources.*

For the original IRA, intelligence gathering "consisted of tracing the activities of enemy agents and spies, keeping records of enemy personnel, contacts with friendly personnel in government and Crown service" among other things. They intercepted and decoded government correspondence and communication, as well as relying on moles. Intercepted correspondence was especially useful in warning comrades about impending raids or arrests.[121]

Intelligence Research Questions

Journalists use the "five W's" to build their stories. Resistance intelligence workers can use the same framework as a starting point and ask questions like the following:

What?

- Strategic: What's the key thing we're fighting?
- What is its organizational or corporate structure?
- Is it driven by the need to make a profit, to maximize public support, or some other cause? What drives it forward? What do they want, and what are they afraid of?
- What are their likely courses of action? What are the most dangerous courses of action (for us) that the enemy might take?
- What is the terrain of the operational area, geographically, socially, economically, politically, and infrastructurally?

- What are the structural points where the opposition is strongest or weakest? What are their shortcomings and vulnerabilities?

Who?

- Who is our opponent? What are their motivations and backgrounds? What are their intentions? What are their capabilities? What can we anticipate of their actions from their doctrine, procedures, past action, tactics, etc.? Can we get inside their heads?
- Who makes decisions, by what process, and who advises them? Who owns what? What is their level of readiness for conflict? What is the morale of the opposition? What are their internal and external relationships?
- Key individuals. Who is supporting it? Who opposes it? (Draw up a spectrum of parties, as discussed later.)
- Who enforces the decision and who would resisters encounter on the front lines? Police, security, etc? How many are there, what equipment, vehicles, tools or arms do they have? What is their level of training?
- Do we have sympathizers on the inside? If not, could any of them be brought around? Could the planned action have any impact on bystanders or other people?

When?

- What is the schedule for proceeding?
- When are the critical deadlines or moments at which we can intervene?
- Tactical: What are the business hours of the target? When are shift changes? When is it busiest or slowest?

Where?

- Tactical: Where is the action happening?
- Do we have maps of the area?
- How easy is it to access, and by what routes?
- What places do the opposition frequent?

How?

- Have people fought a similar struggle before?

- How, and what tactics did they use? Did they win? Why or why not?
- Are those people available as allies, advisers, or elders?
- What means of struggle do we have available to us now, and which do we need to develop?

Modern resistance groups have a huge range of possible intelligence sources, including these:

Human sources. The easiest source of information may be someone you know or can cultivate a relationship with. Experts or journalists can be very helpful. So can sympathizers inside an organization you are struggling against, whether those are people who have worked there a long time or people sent in undercover to gather information. Useful sympathizers don't have to be highly placed moles. Tradespeople, cleaning staff, and other working folks often have valuable information about what is really going on inside an organization. (And cleaning staff may have access to every office.) The World War II Danish resistance group BOPA recruited young factory apprentices, who helped identify factories used to supply the German military, factories that were later attacked. The SOE recruited tradespeople to identify the most effective ways of sabotaging industrial machinery (and even built a special "experimental establishment and school" for sabotage research).[122]

Charles Dobson argues: "The best intelligence comes from inside organizations that can influence the success of your project. Let's suppose your goal is to change government policy. Reading government reports will provide some useful information. But talking to bureaucrats will provide new information and a quick rundown on attitudes inside government. A sympathetic senior bureaucrat who understands your project can provide the most help. Finding such a person will help you make all the right moves."[123]

In our pipeline example, we'll want to recruit or consult with a variety of people including experts on the regulatory process, pipeline technologies and construction, tradespeople, even municipal workers in townships the line passes through.

Governments commonly recruit spies and human sources using dirty methods. Former KGB agent Stanislav Levchenko wrote that there were four main reasons people became intelligence sources: ideology, money, ego, or compromise (e.g., extortion, threats, and coercion). For a resistance movement to use the latter three can be dangerous, both morally and practically. Those in power have more money, more fame, and more coercive force to wield; a human source motivated by money, ego, or threats may be unreliable.

Far better to recruit sources through solidarity, loyalty, and shared aims. This was how the original IRA enlisted human sources, explains biographer Tim Pat Coogan. Michael Collins's agents, he writes, "were not highly trained, C.I.A.-style operatives, but ordinary men and women, people whom nobody had ever taken notice of before. Collins gave them a belief in themselves, a courage they did not know they possessed, and they in return gave him a complete picture of how their masters operated."[124]

If you want to have a good source on the inside, it's important to cultivate a trusting, ongoing relationship with that person that respects their limits and the risks they take. Protect their identity and their safety.

Reconnaissance and scouting. Resistance groups should know their territory well, and gain a huge advantage from having a detailed, up-to-date picture of their area of struggle.[125] This requires scouting and reconnaissance of targets.

Let's say you want to stage a sit-in at the well-secured office of a pipeline contractor. To prepare, you might want to watch the site at critical times. If an action is planned to take place on a Tuesday, consider watching

the two preceding Tuesdays to ensure you have a good sense of what is going on there.

Have an appropriate cover so you can scout the area without interruption or drawing unnecessary attention. If the target site is in a remote area, maybe you want to pose as a wilderness photographer or hiker. If the target is in a downtown area, maybe you want to pose as a student working on a laptop in a nearby café. In an industrial area, perhaps you need to look like a maintenance worker or tradesperson with a hard hat, coveralls, and a clipboard.

In their scouting manual, the Ruckus Society suggests: "Good scouting usually begins with good research. . . . Often, your potential action site is far away and you don't want to make repeated trips. So if you haven't been to the potential action site try to visualize it."[126]

They also have plenty of suggestions for things to bring on a scouting mission, suggestions I've expanded on in the scouting equipment sidebar.

When doing recon, understand the kinds of action being considered so you can look for the right things. Are you planning a banner drop and need a secure and highly visible location? Or do you want to stage a surprise action with well-covered entry and egress routes? Know in advance the kinds of tactics you are scouting to prepare for.

Across all kinds of action, scouts will also want to look for cameras and other surveillance in and around the action site.

Open sources. An enormous amount of information is available freely and openly. Newspapers and the media are valuable resources (especially with Google Alerts or other online tools that will notify you when news matching your keywords is posted). Press releases and media statements from companies and bureaucracies can be useful. Social networks, forums, or newsgroups are useful for tracking down relationships among people you might be researching. WikiLeaks, Cryptome, and other whistleblower

resources can be valuable when you need to know what's going on behind the scenes of power.

Information that has been online, but has since deleted can often be found in search engine caches or the Internet Archive (archive.org).

Don't forget offline sources of information, such as the library. Those sources are especially relevant when looking for information from the 1990s and earlier. The reference section, phone book (and phone book archives), newspaper archives and microfiche, and old yearbooks can be valuable.

Michael Collins, too, used open sources. His aide Charlie Dalton went through newspapers and cut out "any paragraphs referring to the personnel of the Royal Irish Constabulary, or military, such as transfers, their movements socially, attendance at wedding receptions, garden parties, etc. These I pasted on a card which was sent to the Director of Intelligence for his perusal and instructions. Photographs and other data which were or might be of interest were gathered and put away. We often gathered useful information of the movements of important enemy personages in this manner, who we traced also by a study of *Who's Who*, from which we learned the names of the connections and clubs."

The challenge of open sources is to pluck useful and accurate knowledge from an ocean of data. Open sources may be of lower quality. Sometimes the problems are deliberate; when the ANC gathered maps to plan their strategy in the 1960s, they found that the South African government had deliberately introduced errors into public maps as a form of disinformation.[128] They had to compensate for this during analysis.

Scouting Equipment

Useful scouting equipment may include the following:

- Maps, charts, blueprints, or aerial photos of target and surrounding area.
- Navigation equipment (such as compass, GPS, altimeter, or rangefinder/distance finder/electronic measuring tape).
- Appropriate clothing and footwear for conditions and cover. Rain gear, hip waders or rubber boots for wet areas, coveralls for dirty places. Protection from hazards or toxic materials (mask, gloves, etc.).
- Good camera with appropriate range of lenses (including telephoto) with extra batteries and multiple memory cards in case one needs to be concealed. (Video camera or audio recorder if appropriate, useful for hands-free notes.)
- Binoculars, scouting scope, or telescope. Night-vision equipment if appropriate.
- General supplies including headlamp or flashlight, wilderness supplies, boat kit, first aid kit, wilderness survival kit, duct tape, dry bag or Ziploc bags, padded or hard-sided case for electronics.
- A small foam pad or something to sit on during long waits. A 3-by-5-foot rectangle of carpet for crossing barbed wire fences or debris.
- Communications equipment for scouting or action (perhaps with hands-free headsets). Radios or phones.
- Scanners and frequency counters. (Note that there may be legal issues associated with listening to scanners for direct action, depending on your jurisdiction.)
- Waterproof notepad and writing utensils.
- Personal effects as needed: cash, ID, etc.
- The Ruckus Society scouting manual has extra tips on scouting intermodal freight facilities, electronic scouting (radio frequencies and communications), ships, etc.[127]

Remember that for any serious resistance movement, intelligence goes hand in hand with counterintelligence. Especially with online sources, it’s worth the effort to browse safely and anonymously; otherwise you may be identifiable to the site owners (or others). Don’t tip your hand unnecessarily to the people or entities you are researching. Use good internet security

practices such as Tor, VPNs provided by radical organizations, and other anonymous browsing tools.

With open sources like the Internet, the biggest challenge is to winnow out the useful information from the astronomical volume of garbage.

Allies. Your friends and allies may already have the intelligence you need. Ask around to save yourself extra work and to track down additional sources (especially human sources). Academics and researchers may have databases on your subject of interest. Campaigners, grassroots activists, or union organizers might have a friend on the inside you can connect with. Similarly, it's important to share what you know with your allies. Entire campaigns can be built around this, as SHAC demonstrated (which we'll return to in chapter 12).

Maps. Road maps and aerial photographs are incredibly useful and publicly available resources. I use online maps almost every time I plan an action. If you need to choose between different sites for an action, those online services are a huge time-saver when you need to consider access or exit routes to an action, or choose multiple sites for disruptive action. You still need up-to-date recon, but they'll save time and reduce your workload, as well as giving you high-resolution photographs of places it might be inconvenient to access. On bodies of water, nautical charts are very handy.

Government or private registries and databases. Open sources will get you pretty far, but some information needs to be retrieved from closed or semi-closed sources. Aboveground groups can request specific answers through Access to Information/Freedom of Information channels, usually for a small fee. Sensitive information is commonly censored and responses can be slow. (Make sure to ask for information about previous requests on the same topic. This can help you save time, zero in on interesting material, and identify potential allies.)

You can learn a lot from government bidding websites (like MERX in Canada), where the government posts requests for services and contracts. You can find everything from successful bidders to plans and blueprints. Also consider land registries or land claims offices, driving and licensing registries, tax records, political donation listings. (Some of these may require a nominal fee to access information.)

Information about people can sometimes be found through voter registration information, tax records, or court records. (That's especially true if you are running a background check. Has someone been through court but ended up serving much less time than you might expect? Have they agreed to cooperate with the state previously? Those would be warning signs that someone could be an informer.)

Espionage and social engineering. I'm not suggesting that you do the things in this category. Resistance movements sometimes use them. They're also techniques that those in power might use against you, and so they're worth knowing about. For example, going through someone's garbage is illegal for you, but not illegal for the government. Garbage can contain bills (credit card, phone, utilities), notes or correspondence, discarded files, and other bits of information.

A major form of espionage by deception is social engineering, which is "the art and science of getting people to comply with your wishes" using certain psychological knowledge and tricks.[129] Social engineers understand that the weak point in a security system is often not the technology; it's the people. So, if a social engineer wants to get into a secured building, they don't rappel in through the ceiling; they stand by the door with a stack of books in their arms so that a passerby opens it for them without thinking. If they want access to a corporation's computer network, they don't reprogram the firewall like leather-clad movie hackers; they just leave some USB sticks with spyware in the company parking lot, and wait for an employee to pick one up and plug it into a work computer. If they need to get

information about a person's work or school history, they don't put on an elaborate disguise; they just make a "routine" phone call and pretend to be checking job references.

Confidence, quick thinking, an authoritative voice, and a good pretext may be all that's needed to get someone to give up information over the phone.[130] There are ample resources on social engineering, and how to avoid it, online.

■ ■ ■

Armed movements like the IRA and the ANC offer clear-cut examples of why resistance movements need good intelligence. But the core principles apply to any movement that wants to use political force effectively.

I've mentioned already my role in the campaign to keep farms open at several prisons in Canada. The prison farm campaign at Collins Bay Penitentiary in Kingston required extensive and ongoing reconnaissance to be effective, and this became a core part of our strategy. We promised that if the government failed to listen to public opinion—and to answer basic questions about why the farm was being closed, what its budget was, and so on—then we would use massive civil disobedience to stage and hold blockades against the removal of cattle or machinery.

We used several different intelligence approaches to prepare for this and to guide the campaign in general. Human sources were critical. The prison system employs—directly or indirectly—well over a thousand people in our area. With such a large pool of potential sources, many of whom were already disenchanted or angry with the administration, it was easy to get in touch with sympathizers inside the affected institutions. We were able to get highly up-to-date insider information. We often knew about government plans and announcements well in advance, which made it much easier for

us to plan and mobilize people (instead of scrambling to react after the fact).

Friendly journalists often shared what they knew with us. Newspaper and government reports were sometimes useful as well. Some members of our coalition met with Corrections officials at different points; those officials weren't going to share sensitive information with us, but we did glean some useful information, especially when it came to their attitudes. (Direct meetings like this can be dangerous, of course, because the other side will want to gather information, too, and possibly to intimidate. That's especially true for any meeting involving police.)

The farmers in the coalition were able to predict the types of transport trucks and loading facilities needed to remove the cattle. We also knew that the prison didn't have a loading dock for cattle, which meant that loading would be an extended operation.

Online maps were invaluable. We couldn't do complete direct recon on a thousand acres of prison farmland, and armed prison guards are not happy with visitors wandering around. But using Google Maps we could instantly access high-resolution aerial photographs of the site. We combined this information with direct recon and information from our human sources inside. This allowed us to develop our blockade strategy.

Fig. 8-2, an annotated image based on Google Maps imagery, shows part of the prison farm. We identified three potential access points for the cattle trucks. Access point 1 is the main entrance for the entire complex, a paved two-lane road with wide shoulders. Transport trucks could move quickly here in any weather. Access point 2 is a disused former driveway. It was blocked by concrete barriers and partly grassy. It would be possible for transport operators to move the barriers and try to drive across this point. Access point 3 was a sturdy farm gate on the opposite side of the farm. A winding dirt-and-gravel road connected it to the main complex and the farm buildings.

It was a rainy summer, which meant that the gravel road was not likely to be passable for fully loaded transport trucks. Also, a prisoner who worked on the farm “accidentally” dumped a large load of manure in the middle of that road, obstructing it. We knew that a few people could lock down the rear gate easily, so we focused on the main entrance.

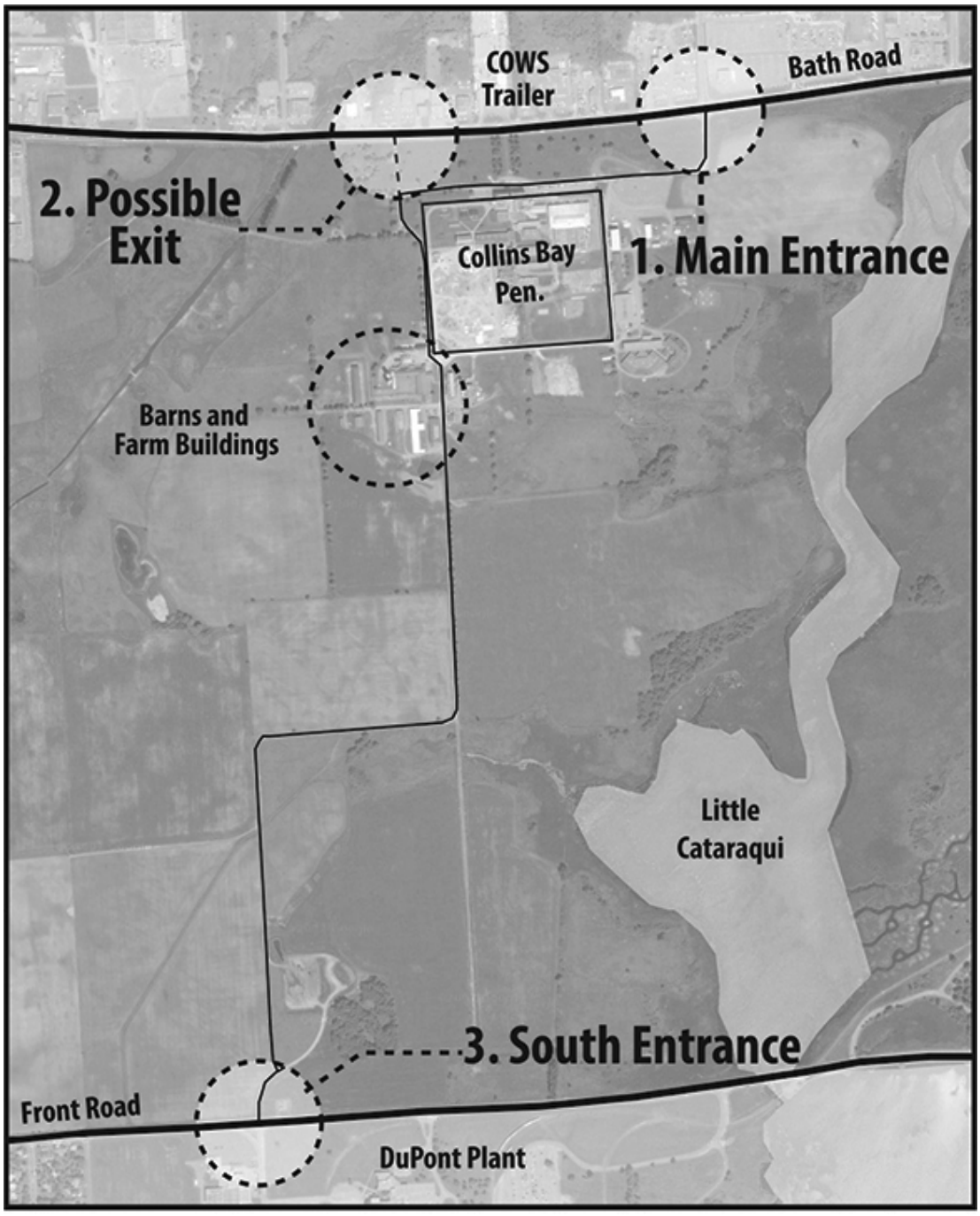


Figure 8-2: Prison Farm Map (from a handout)

When we publicly announced the civil disobedience strategy, we also placed a reconnaissance station in front of the prison. Since "reconnaissance" sounded a bit militaristic for our campaign's tone, we chose a more warm-and-fuzzy name, dubbing it the "Community On Watch

Station” or COWS. (This framing also reinforced the idea that, even though we might break the law, our community was in the right by defending itself.) This would make it psychologically easier for people to defy police in the campaign.

We found a sympathetic business owner across the street from the prison and placed a camper trailer in a front parking lot. The COWS trailer was to be staffed twenty-four hours a day, watching the front access points and the farm buildings for any sign that the cattle might be moved out soon, especially transport trucks with cattle trailers. I stocked the trailer with snacks, some petty cash for minor expenses, and some board games and books. I also brought a pair of binoculars, a logbook for recording activities, and—most importantly—a mobile phone that the watcher could use to report problems or to trigger a phone tree that would bring hundreds of people to block the entrance, night or day, on a few minutes’ notice.

I took the first shift on the first day of watch, set up a schedule, and did a few media interviews. The COWS trailer was to be staffed by volunteers in shifts around the clock. I knew that the COWS trailer was a big logistical risk because it required so much labor. I expected to be spending a lot of sleepless nights there to keep the watch going. But the community stepped up; we were flooded with campaign volunteers taking shifts. The station—emblazoned with banners—became a physical rallying point for the campaign, a meeting place, and overflowed with donated food and supplies.

During the weeks that followed, I didn’t have to take a single shift for lack of volunteers, and not a single person missed the shift they volunteered for. Our community doesn’t have a recent history of that kind of radical direct action. But people did the work, and they did it well. I still have the logbook from the watch station—filled with detailed notes by volunteers recording each shift, things they saw, and stories of friendly neighbors who came to visit them. (We also canvassed the neighborhood with tongue-in-cheek “wanted” posters with pictures of the responsible government

officials, warning neighbors to watch out for “cattle rustlers” and to call our hotline if they saw anything suspicious.)

The experience deeply changed the way I thought about radical organizing—and about the importance of intelligence gathering. That work also laid the groundwork for further direct action in that campaign.

ANALYZING INTELLIGENCE

Let’s return to our anti-pipeline example. Because we have many intelligence sources, we could easily gather enormous amounts of information about the proposed pipeline. Regulatory filings from energy companies routinely run into the thousands of pages. Technical reports on pipeline safety might contain millions of data points. And understanding the relationship between colonial governments and specific Indigenous groups could require that we listen to oral histories, study history books, and analyze treaties and land claims documents. The amount of raw information we could collect is incredible.

And not all of that information will be correct or unbiased—I can tell you firsthand that an oil company will say almost anything to get a profitable pipeline approved.

So we must understand this: *Raw data is not intelligence.* Information becomes intelligence once processed and analysed. That means assessing whether information is *relevant*, *accurate*, and *reliably sourced*. It means sorting through the information to find the most important pieces—salient

knowledge—and constructing a coherent overall picture. And it means avoiding selection bias that would twist the information.

So how can we focus our effort and keep ourselves from being bogged down? The answer, as always, is action. The US Marine Corps intelligence handbook observes "that knowledge does not exist for its own sake, *but as the basis for action.* We do not develop lengthy intelligence studies just because we have the ability to do so or because a subject is of academic interest. Intelligence that is not acted upon or that does not provide the potential for future action is useless."[131]

An excess of information can be just as bad as a shortage of that information that isn't analyzed properly. Consider the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, which came as a complete surprise to the United States. But American historian Roberta Wohlstetter explained: "If our intelligence system and all our other channels of information failed to produce an accurate image of Japanese intentions and capabilities, it was not for want of the relevant materials. Never before have we had so complete an intelligence picture of the enemy."[132] The problem, she argues was that the US military "failed to anticipate Pearl Harbor not for want of the relevant materials, but because of a plethora of irrelevant ones."[133]

The problem wasn't just excessive information, but also racist bias. As Christopher Andrew explained, "these problems were compounded by the underrating of the Japanese opponents. 'Why be apologetic about Anglo-Saxon racial superiority?' Winston Churchill once asked. 'We *are* superior.' Until Pearl Harbor, Churchill's confidence in the racial inferiority of 'little yellow men' to Anglo-Saxons was widely shared by both U.S. and British military commanders."[134] General MacArthur insisted that Japanese planes at Pearl Harbor were piloted by white mercenaries.

Racism was also at play in 1973, when Israel failed to anticipate the coordinated surprise attack that started the Yom Kippur War, despite ample sources of intelligence. The head of Israeli intelligence agency Mossad

explained: “We simply did not believe that they [the Arabs] were capable. In effect—that was also my personal problem—we scorned them.”[135] The same kind of wishful thinking afflicted members of the British government facing Michael Collins and the IRA. Blinded at the tactical level, high-level bureaucrats told the heads of government what they wanted to hear. They preferred “comforting illusion to unpalatable truth.”

Bias is very dangerous for organizations that are *strongly motivated by ideology*. Even paid professional intelligence analysts rarely maintain a neutral perspective. And people join resistance movements because of strong ideology. That can make it much harder for them to look at things objectively.

That’s dangerous, as Jane Mansbridge pointed out in *Why We Lost the ERA*; it plays into the iron law of involution. Mansbridge explains that many of those who supported the Equal Rights Amendment failed to gather proper intelligence on how well their arguments were working on public opinion. Instead they relied on their own ideologies and ignored reality when it didn’t conform to their preexisting bias.[136] And so they lost.[137]

When people self-select into a group because they possess the same ideology, they are more vulnerable to logical pitfalls like groupthink. You can reduce this tendency by maintaining group diversity and by crosschecking and questioning your assumptions. No matter how good your intelligence sources, excessive ideological bias can make you overlook the obvious and render your analysis misleading or even catastrophic.

INTELLIGENCE PACKAGING AND PRODUCTS

Once we have done some rudimentary analysis of our intelligence, what do we do to make it useful for action?

Intelligence analysis can yield many useful products:

Warnings. If your intelligence suggests something important will happen soon (especially something bad), it's important to warn your colleagues. Maybe you've learned that FBI or RCMP agents are sniffing around your community, or that there's some ongoing investigation. Maybe a pipeline we're opposing is moving forward ahead of schedule.

Michael Collins and the IRA frequently learned of impending raids and arrests and were able to warn their colleagues to flee or sleep in different places. They saved many from prison and torture.[138]

Warnings must be issued in a way that protects intelligence sources. When the Allies in World War II cracked various Axis code systems, allowing them to track German submarines, they had to be extremely careful about how they used the information. They couldn't just intercept and destroy every U-Boat. In the beginning, they couldn't destroy more than good luck would suggest they should have. If the Axis learned that their codes were broken, they would have changed them, a major blow to the Allied war effort. Intelligence and counterintelligence go hand in hand.

General intelligence briefings, and updates, and situations maps. Keep your comrades and allies in the know about the opposition and the state of your struggle, so that they can make intelligent decisions. Reports, briefings, and regular updates can make sure that everyone is on the same

page. Good intelligence (the Marines emphasize) is *objective, thorough, accurate, timely, usable, relevant, and available.*

Summarizing what you know graphically can help make complex information clearer. Annotated maps, organizational charts of the opposition, and concept maps are very useful tools.

In our anti-pipeline struggle this could be a flow chart of the regulatory approval process. Or a map of regulator meeting dates and locations that could be disrupted. Or a map of the pipeline route showing Indigenous territories and watersheds crossed.

Social and political spectrum analysis. Don't just map the opposition; map the social and political landscape of your struggle to clarify your goals for strategy, mobilization, and recruitment. In their civil-rights-era book *A Manual for Direct Action*, Martin Oppenheimer and George Lakey ask: "Who has the power? What is the relationship of forces, both racial and otherwise? What is the economy like?"[139] They suggest creating a social inventory, ranking different institutions or parties along a spectrum of support and opposition.[140] Figure 8-3 is based on their suggestion for putting groups into six different categories from most to least supportive.

I've inserted some typical civil rights examples into the spectrum. If you wanted to run a local civil rights campaign in the early 1960s, your active antagonists might include the KKK and White Citizens' Councils. The federal government and bystander citizens might be on the fence. You might get moral support from sympathetic churches, and perhaps some funding or organizational support from an organization like CORE or the NAACP.

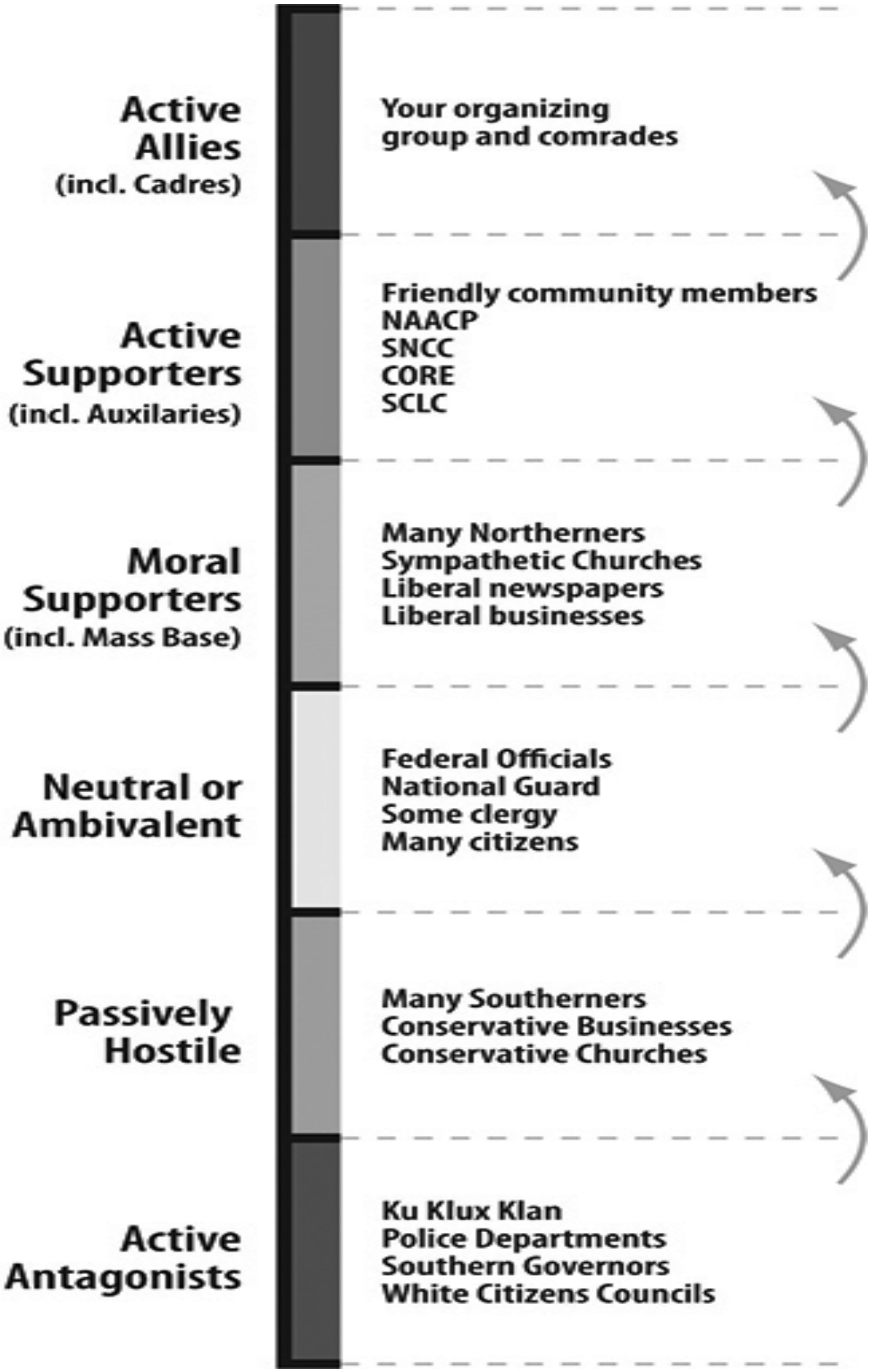

Active Allies (incl. Cadres)
Your organizing group and comrades
Active Supporters (incl. Auxilaries)
Friendly community members
NAACP
SNCC
CORE
SCLC
Moral Supporters (incl. Mass Base)
Many Northerners
Sympathetic Churches
Liberal newspapers
Liberal businesses
Neutral or Ambivalent
Federal Officials
National Guard
Some clergy
Many citizens
Passively Hostile
Many Southerners
Conservative Businesses
Conservative Churches
Active Antagonists
Ku Klux Klan
Police Departments
Southern Governors
White Citizens Councils

Figure 8-3: Social and Political Landscape Analysis (Civil Rights era examples)

This spectrum is important to understand for a couple of reasons. For one, it is valuable to identify disagreements among powerful groups: “Above all, it is important to remember that elites do not always agree among themselves. They have interests which differ and sometimes conflict. These differences and conflicts can be ‘used’ by the smart civil rights worker.”[141] Pitting certain businesses and the federal government against authorities in the South was crucial.

That doesn’t mean that resisters should go easy on neutral parties. In dealing with segregated stores, Oppenheimer and Lakey explain: “Generally it is wise to try to boycott all stores, even when some stores are prepared to give in to demands on equal hiring and serving. The managers who are willing to give in will then pressure the more stubborn ones.”

Once you understand the spectrum of parties, your job in action will be to push people and groups along the spectrum so that they will become more friendly—or at least, less antagonistic—toward you. For example, you might recruit friendly community supporters onto the organizing team. Or you might want to encourage moral supporters (the mass base) to become active supporters by contributing funds or resources. Intelligence can help identify ways of doing this, along with potential obstacles. Oppenheimer and Lakey warn: “Where allies are concerned, your chief problems are fear and apathy.”[142]

Getting people out of the neutrality mind-set can be difficult, they note in a civil-rights-era example: “Some ministers, schoolteachers, and businessmen in the Negro community depend on segregation for their living. Others do not. People with independent incomes (or no incomes) will tend to be readier to act than those who depend on others and are insecure.”[143]

Dealing with hostile parties and antagonists is more challenging, and you probably aren't going to achieve that with persuasion. But you can neutralize their ability to harm you. The KKK was neutralized in large part by the Deacons for Defense, while some other antagonists were neutralized by changing legislation.

Any action at all may push people out of the neutrality camp and cause them to become polarized. A highly polarized spectrum of parties isn't necessarily bad—in fact, it is often easier to mobilize people in a very polarized community than in a community with a large number of indifferent people. You can't stop everyone from hating you, but you can provide your allies with means to action while limiting the ability of antagonists to attack or damage your organization.

(Another tool to assess the political landscape is through a SWOT analysis—Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats—which I'll come back to in the final chapter.)

Target lists. As the George Jackson Brigade said, compiling target lists is a fundamental intelligence task. Even the most liberal campaign has a list of people to write to; radicals use similar lists to find the pressure points in a bureaucratic system. Of course, targets are often not people but facilities, organizations, or infrastructure. Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC) made a whole—and very successful—campaign out of publishing target lists and letting decentralized groups do the direct action. Annotated target lists, perhaps along with priorities or rankings, are a key intelligence product that allow strategists to plan well and combatants to focus on action. Such lists identify the adversary's general capabilities and vulnerabilities, and compile information to aid in target selection (like target criticality, vulnerability, recuperability, and accessibility, which I'll come back to in chapter 11, "Actions & Tactics").

In the anti-pipeline example, this could include pumping stations, pipeline junctions, corporate offices, or contractor equipment yards.

Detailed target profiles and reconnaissance. Tactical intelligence about specific targets is crucial, especially once a target list and a "short list" of targets for action have been created. A target profile of a person might include biographical information, public statements that person has made, their CV, and so on. A target profile of a physical site might include a map of the area with possible entrance and exit routes, notable features and terrain, information about security, and so on. Reconnaissance is crucial to developing a proper target profile for physical places.

New tools and tactics, handbooks for struggle. Intelligence is not limited to gathering information about enemy forces. It also includes research and development that can be used by friendly forces to improve their effectiveness. This was the case with the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) in World War II, which was tasked with organizing sabotage and other forms of unconventional warfare against Axis forces around the world.

SOE recruited and trained agents in unconventional tactics and then dropped them into occupied countries to work with resistance organizations and help coordinate actions between those groups and the Allied conventional forces. This meant relying heavily on clandestine communications, and SOE delivered special radios for that purpose. They also conducted research and development on tools and equipment. They developed a miniature folding motorcycle for parachutists, and a special suppressed pistol that was easy to conceal, various explosive devices, and special folding crossbows designed to fire incendiary bolts and powered by thick rubber bands. They distributed cheap firearms to resistance cells with an emphasis on those that were easy to use and maintain and which were compatible with enemy ammunition. Some firearms were simple enough to

be made in bicycle shops. And they researched techniques for resistance operatives to use, and SOE's training syllabus for agents has since been declassified and published.[144] (More recent books like *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching* are similarly useful tactical guides based on practical experience.)

Forecasts and predictions. No movement can win by simply responding to events after the fact. If you want to win, you have to seize the initiative; you have to get several steps ahead of your adversary. We know resistance movements have limited resources; developing new skills and capacities can take time. Winning means preparing to fight the way that the struggle will be waged tomorrow; not the way that it was fought yesterday. Understand and research how your opponent has functioned in the past in order to anticipate their actions in the future. Map possible outcomes of your actions and campaigns; understand how to maximize the good outcomes and respond effectively to the bad. (The final two chapters discuss how to do this.) If you've run through many different scenarios, you'll know how to act swiftly even in emergencies.

THE MAN WHO VOLUNTEERED FOR AUSCHWITZ

Sometimes intelligence is very costly. In the middle of 1940, the Nazis began to send prisoners to a new prison camp in occupied Poland. As the number of people "deported" to Auschwitz grew, grim suspicions began to circulate about what was happening there. But few people ever got out of Auschwitz to tell their stories. A handful of prisoners with wealthy families were released in the early days, but they had mostly been terrorized into silence and wouldn't speak about events in the camp.

Enter Witold Pilecki, a Polish military officer and member of the underground resistance.[145] Pilecki had a wife and two children, whom he rarely saw because of his underground work. But he volunteered to infiltrate Auschwitz to gather intelligence.

In September of 1940, Pilecki deliberately wandered out into a Warsaw street as people were being rounded up. When captured, he gave a fake name. He and his fellow prisoners were beaten severely (some of them arbitrarily shot) and sent to Auschwitz.

In 1940 the camp's infrastructure of mass murder was still rudimentary. The gas chambers had not yet been built. On arrival, Pilecki pretended to be a tradesperson. He began to write regular reports of what he saw—the arbitrary beatings and murders, the mass executions, the games in which guards would bury prisoners alive and place bets on how long it would take for them to suffocate.

He reported on numbers of prisoners, where the prisoners came from, and what happened to them. His reports, smuggled to resistance command and eventually out of Europe, became the Allies' main source of intelligence inside the camps. His intelligence made it clear that Auschwitz was not just a prison or labour camp, but a site of mass murder and extermination. From Pilecki's actions, the Allies learned details of the Holocaust early in the war.

While he was smuggling out his secret reports, Pilecki got in trouble with the SS for failing to send personal letters. Prisoners were told to send regular letters to their relatives. These letters were meant to hide the atrocities in Auschwitz, and were expected to begin with the words *Ich bin gesund und es geht mir gut*—I'm healthy and I'm doing well.[146] The SS interrogated Pilecki about why he wasn't sending letters. He lied convincingly, and instead of killing him the SS made him fill out a change of address form for his imaginary relatives.

In addition to his reports, Pilecki organized underground resistance groups among the prisoners. They redistributed food and supplies, arranged less strenuous working conditions for ill members, gathered information, and made connections with civilians and resisters on the outside. Pilecki negotiated alliances among different political factions among the prisoners. And they dealt quietly and ruthlessly with informers.

They also made careful and detailed plans for an eventual armed uprising. Special, secret squads were put on rotating duty shifts, ready to lead an uprising at a moment's notice if there was any sign of outside intervention. An arms drop, perhaps, or a landing by friendly paratroopers. But that intervention didn't come (at least, not until Russian troops liberated the camp at the end of the war).

Witold Pilecki spent more than thirty-one months in Auschwitz; he was there for most of the camp's operation. In April 1943, Pilecki escaped Auschwitz with two others. He then begged leaders of the Polish underground army to aid an uprising in Auschwitz. But many officers in the Polish underground thought the prisoners a lost cause, too weak to fight or to be of any use in the resistance. And the Allies believed that Pilecki's intelligence reports were exaggerated; they thought it preposterous that *millions* of people were being killed in the Holocaust. So he went to Warsaw, where he took part in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. During the uprising he was again captured and became a POW.

He survived the war. But the postwar government of Poland was a Soviet puppet state. Pilecki refused to leave Poland as his comrades urged. Rather, he stayed to compile evidence of *Soviet* atrocities; deportations to concentration camps had been replaced by deportations to gulags. Pilecki was captured, interrogated and tortured by Stalinist secret police, and forced to sign a phony confession. In 1948, he was executed. The Polish government expunged his name from public records, so too few people learned the story of Pilecki's courage and sacrifice.

I don’t know how Pilecki managed to keep his sanity in Auschwitz. I’ve read his book-length final report cover-to-cover and still don’t understand where he found his reserves of determination and strength. He faced all the unceasing horrors of the concentration camp with barely a moment of respite.

Witold Pilecki’s story is not just about intelligence gathering with great risk. It is a story of contrasts, of action and inaction in the face of implacable evil. The great majority of Germans, or Poles, or the Allies who knew about the concentration camps did little to impede them before the end of the war. But Witold Pilecki took action. He risked everything and gave everything. He acted, and continued to act, despite a horrible cost to mind and body.

It’s easy to be intimidated by the depth of his sacrifice or by the fantastic nature of his actions. But don’t focus on that; rather ask, who do you want to be? Someone who stands idly by in the face of terror? Or someone who acts, even when it could cost them?

■ ■ ■

Of course, gathering intelligence about the adversary is not enough. Resistance groups also need to deal with active attempts by those in power to gather information about *them*, to penetrate resistance organizations with disruptive infiltrators and informers. Which brings us to the next chapter: Counterintelligence & Repression.

CHAPTER 9

Counterintelligence & Repression

"It is my hope that activists will . . . feel a sense of historical grounding as they come to understand that the state and media have a certain number of weapons. . . . Then, once dissident citizens know what these weapons are, they can more successfully strategize how to sidestep the sharper edges of suppression and become more effective activists. The state and its collaborators will never be able to fully suppress dissent."[147]

—Jules Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*

CITIZENS' COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE THE FBI

It's the dead of night, March 8, 1971.[148] A group of people wearing business suits are quietly breaking into an FBI field office in Media, Pennsylvania.

This group has spent months surveilling the office, mapping the neighborhood and recording routines, planning escape routes.[149] A woman in the group even posed as a college student looking for an FBI job to get a

look at the inside of the office.[150] Their lock-picker learned his craft from library books and made his own tools to avoid leaving a paper trail.[151]

The burglars do their work quickly and efficiently, disappearing before dawn. When the FBI agents show up for work they find their office meticulously ransacked, their desks and filing cabinets empty.[152]

The stolen files reveal a secret FBI "COinterINTELligence PROgram" (COINTELPRO) meant to infiltrate, disrupt, and suppress social movements across the country. The FBI, activists begin to learn, has used a score of dirty tricks that run the gamut from implanted news stories all the way through to direct violence and assassination. They have especially tried to create fights and schisms within social movements, worsening personal disagreements and sending phony letters to incite anger and conflict. COINTELPRO has been targeting everyone from the women's movement to the New Left, from nonviolent peace protesters to Black militants.

The burglars dub themselves "The Citizens' Commission to Investigate the FBI." In the weeks after the burglary, they send manila envelopes without return addresses to the offices of major newspapers and the groups named in the files. A few newspapers and magazines are bold enough to break the story in spite of government threats.

The FBI is deeply embarrassed; not out of moral regret, but because they got *caught*. In the months that follow, the FBI shuts down 103 of 538 offices out of fear that they are vulnerable to similar break-ins.[153] Soon, FBI boss J. Edgar Hoover officially announces the end of COINTELPRO. Coming from a professional liar, this means less than nothing. (COINTELPRO is disrupted, but in the years to follow it quietly resumes in other forms.)

A government investigation of the break-in goes on for six years (and itself generates some 33,000 pages of paperwork). Hundreds of FBI agents are tasked with finding the burglars. But no evidence is found; no member of the Citizens' Commission is ever identified or captured. (Only in 2014

will members of the group publicly come forward.) The underground group, in a single, perfectly executed stroke, exposed and disrupted a program that fragmented many movements and killed many revolutionaries. Aboveground groups now have a chance to learn about the secret programs arrayed against them, and to fight back.

■ ■ ■

The day I began writing this chapter an old friend went to prison.

She went to jail for trying to organize a protest against the G20 meetings in Toronto in 2010. She was arrested before the protests even began, along with dozens of other organizers in a series of midnight raids. Community organizers (and a few shocked neighbors) were pulled out of their beds by police at gunpoint in the middle of the night. (In the next few days, over one thousand people were arrested for participating in protests or simply walking down the street.)

For trying to mobilize opposition to the G20, those organizers were charged with "conspiracy"—a nebulous charge that is difficult to defend against. The activists were kept in prison for weeks, in some cases months, without bail. Once they were allowed out of jail, it was only under draconian house-arrest conditions in which the activists' own families were required by the state to keep watch and report any potential breach of bail.

I'm not telling you this story because it's unique. I'm telling you because it is not.

The history of resistance is also the history of repression. Dictators do not stay in place merely out of inertia, but because they are willing to use the baton, the rack, the surveillance camera, the infiltrator, and the solitary confinement cell. Any system of profound inequality and exploitation perpetuates itself through a combination of deception, subtle coercion, and naked violence.

Military writer John Collins observes that revolutions are best crushed when they are young. “The first, and by far the most important, requirement is to prevent revolutions from flowering. That task can best be accomplished by attacking insurgent causes at the grass roots level *before* revolutionary signs appear.”[154] The earlier repression is carried out, the more effective it is.

When the G20 “conspiracy” arrestees finally went to court, they were able to learn the true extent of the state’s effort to attack them and their communities. They learned of intensive surveillance, of infiltrators put in place eighteen months in advance to organize alongside them, of the kinds of operations a billion dollars in security funding will buy. And they saw firsthand the way that the resources of the courts, the media, and the intelligence apparatus can be used to warp reputations and taint public opinion. In the end, the G20 group agreed to a plea deal that sent six of those charged to prison while avoiding further jail time for the rest.

I will use their case and many others in this chapter to explain how state repression tactics work.

It is said that repressive attempts to fracture our movements will only work if we let them. There is truth in that. But combating repression and COINTELPRO-type tactics requires more than force of will. It requires a real understanding of how those tactics work, so that we can recognize and counter them when we see them at work.

Though all our movements should use at least some rudiments of security culture, discussed in the chapter on Security & Safety, such practices are mostly passive. They are defensive in nature. Security culture guidelines are about what *not* to do, what *not* to discuss. It’s good, but it’s not enough.

Successful movements need to be *proactive*, and they need to go on the offensive. They need to actively anticipate and counteract the methods used by governments, corporations, and intelligence agencies to infiltrate,

sabotage, or otherwise destroy a resistance movement. They need people to specialize in studying and recognizing the patterns of COINTELPRO-style disruption. Programs like COINTELPRO rely on secrecy and ignorance to prevent their targets from responding appropriately. Their techniques and manipulations are much less effective if the people targeted understand what is going on.

Remember that those in power rule by divide and conquer, and that their response to social movements is to try to break them into smaller, manageable parts. COINTELPRO is the ultimate expression of that strategy. Its own documents spell that out clearly. (See sidebar: The FBI's Counterintelligence Program.)

We can divide repression tactics into seven categories. Here I list them in roughly escalating order:[155]

1) *Surveillance*. Agents watch activists and resisters to identify dissidents, leaders, means of support, tactics, and other characteristics of the movement. This is especially useful before the movement has developed a collective security consciousness, and to induce paranoia once a movement matures.
2) *Psychological Warfare and Propaganda*. Agents and puppet media attempt to discredit and undermine the resistance movement, often using dirty tricks. They attempt to confuse, mislead, and deceive the public about the reasons for resistance and the resistance movement itself. They may specifically target leaders and spokespeople.
3) *Infiltration and Informers*. Agents attempt to introduce trained infiltrators into meetings and groups, while simultaneously recruiting informers within the resistance. Infiltration to gather intelligence is only the first step; the end goal is to actively

sabotage groups from the inside, irritate internal schisms, promote horizontal hostility, and act as *agents provocateurs.*

4) *The Legal System*. Those in power attempt to arrest and prosecute resistance members on trivial or unrelated charges. They use the police and other parts of the legal apparatus to harass and hamper activists and to paint them as criminals. They pass draconian legislation to punish dissidents and use excessive legal costs to drain their coffers. They also use these attacks to recruit informers.
5) *Illegal Violence*. Agents attempt to threaten, beat, or kill activists in order to force them into submission and make an example of them. They also carry out break-ins and confiscate or destroy property, all as part of a project of intimidation.
6) *Martial Law and Population Control*. They may use martial law, create checkpoints for travel, and institute overly extensive or invasive security measures. This is intended to intimidate the population in general and separate sympathizers from the resistance. This may manifest as “friendly fascism” or be more overt.
7) *Selective Concessions and Co-optation*. Those in power may offer certain concessions or “gifts” to segments of the population or to dissidents. However, this should not be confused with victory, per se. Usually these concessions are calculated to undercut the support of the resistance movement and give the illusion that those in power are “not so bad” or that they have “changed their ways.” Specifically, these concessions are intended to divide the resistance movement between those who want to keep fighting and those who want to cooperate. Those in power may also try to co-opt the causes or programs of the resistance movement.

The FBI's Counterintelligence Program

The FBI strategy for dealing with movements is best enumerated in a memo on counterintelligence against Black liberation groups, which they called "Black nationalist hate groups."

The memo specifies five main goals, given here verbatim:

1. Prevent a coalition of militant Black nationalist groups. In unity there is strength; a truism that is no less valid for all its triteness. An effective coalition of Black nationalist groups might be the first step toward a real "Mau Mau" in America, the beginning of a true Black revolution.
2. Prevent the rise of a "messiah" who could unify, and electrify, the militant Black nationalist movement. Malcolm X might have been such a "messiah"; he is the martyr of the movement today. Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael, and Elijah Muhammed all aspire to this position. Elijah Muhammed is less of a threat because of his age. King could be a very real contender for this position should he abandon his supposed "obedience" to "white, liberal doctrines" (nonviolence) and embrace Black nationalism. Carmichael has the necessary charisma to be a real threat in this way.
3. Prevent violence on the part of Black nationalist groups. . . . Through counterintelligence it should be possible to pinpoint potential troublemakers and neutralize them before they exercise their potential for violence. [The talk of avoiding violence is ironic, since "neutralize" is a common COINTELPRO euphemism for arranged assassination.]
4. Prevent militant Black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability, by discrediting them to three separate segments of the community. . . . You must discredit these groups and individuals to, first, the responsible Negro community. Second, they must be discredited to the white community, both the responsible community and to "liberals" who have vestiges of sympathy for militant Black nationalist[s] simply because they are negroes. Third, these groups must be discredited in the eyes of Negro radicals, the followers of the movement. This last area requires entirely different tactics from the first two. Publicity about violent

> tendencies and radical statements merely enhances Black nationalists to the last group. . . .
>
> "A final goal should be to prevent the long-range growth of militant Black nationalist organizations, especially among youth. Specific tactics to prevent these groups from converting young people must be developed."[156]

These tactics have been used by military, police, intelligence agencies, and public relations firms for decades and even centuries. As we'll come back to later in the chapter, documents leaked from PR firms like Stratfor have shown the same divide-and-conquer approach is used today.

1. SURVEILLANCE

Pervasive surveillance underlies COINTELPRO; fundamental intelligence is needed to plan and carry out other means of repression.

In 1976, US government investigations relied on human informants 85 percent of the time, while electronic surveillance was used in only 5 percent of cases.[157] In the decades since, this ratio has probably inverted. Mass electronic surveillance is so easy that even apolitical people can assume nearly all their electronic communications are being tracked and analyzed, if not by the government then by corporations for marketing purposes.

Most of us live in surveillance states, and we know it. Indeed, we're meant to know it. Surveillance isn't just meant to gather information. Conspicuous surveillance is used against activists to intimidate them and to create fear and suspicion that will stop them from building networks or taking action effectively. FBI boss J. Edgar Hoover wanted activists to believe that there was "an FBI agent behind every mailbox."

Surveillance can be effective both to stall or prevent action and to create divisions in movements. Psychological research shows that people who know they are under surveillance are more likely to condemn others for breaking behavioral norms.[158] Conspicuous surveillance undermines good relationships between moderates and militants, between liberals and radicals.

From the beginning, government surveillance has been meant to suppress dissent as much as to monitor crime. When hidden cameras were first introduced in Britain, they were used not against common criminals but to photograph suffragist protesters. (Captured suffragists were also the subjects of early propaganda "photoshopping." Photographs of suffragists being choked by police were retouched so the chokeholds were covered over with ladylike scarves.)

Underground groups can respond to the surveillance threat by trying to make themselves invisible. Aboveground groups instead use security culture or, if appropriate, keep a low profile. Resisters can use a wide variety of surveillance countermeasures (see Further Resources). Some of these are physical (like having sensitive conversations face-to-face) and some are electronic (like encrypting email or browsing the web anonymously).

It's important to remember that for aboveground groups, the main goal of surveillance isn't to catch people in crimes, but to make them fearful, paranoid, and inactive. If you want to combat surveillance, then work to overcome paranoia and isolation. We can monitor these efforts, expose

them, and engage in public counter-surveillance. Crucially, we must *take action despite their attempts to intimidate us*. That's more important than any technical countermeasure.

2. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND PROPAGANDA

Counterintelligence agencies use psychological warfare to disrupt movements *internally*. And they try to undermine and discredit movements externally through the use of propaganda and the media, aiming to alienate resisters from potential supporters.

In his book *War at Home: Covert Action Against U.S. Activists and What We Can Do About It*, attorney Brian Glick writes: "The FBI and police used myriad other 'dirty tricks' to undermine progressive movements. They planted false media stories and published bogus leaflets and other publications in the name of targeted groups. They forged correspondence, sent anonymous letters, and made anonymous telephone calls. They spread misinformation about meetings and events, set up pseudo movement groups run by government agents, and manipulated or strongarmed parents, employers, landlords, school officials, and others to cause trouble for activists."[159]

In a 1968 memo, FBI head J. Edgar Hoover observed that "[t]here is a definite hostility among [Students for a Democratic Society] and other New Left groups toward the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), the Young Socialist

Alliance (YSA), and the Progressive Labor Party (PLP). This hostility should be exploited wherever possible." So Hoover ordered agents to instigate or take advantage "of personal conflicts or animosities existing between New Left leaders" as well as leaders in other movements.[160]

These FBI tricks often worked, in part because of the existing fractures in progressive movements. Phony letters and anonymous letters were favorites of the FBI. If you were an activist leader, they might send you a letter from "an anonymous friend" warning that one of your allies was out to get you, or that another activist was bad-mouthing you, or even that another activist group wanted to kill you.

Sometimes counterintelligence agencies use "black propaganda"—phony publications or statements meant to misrepresent and discredit resistance groups. For example, the FBI printed a racist coloring book ostensibly from the Black Panther Party that was designed to inflame the fears of white people and alienate Black allies.

Much of the long-term damage done by COINTELPRO happened because of this divisive psychological warfare. Brian Glick writes that "COINTELPRO often convinced its victims to blame themselves and each other for the problems it created,"—horizontal hostility—"leaving a legacy of cynicism and despair that persists today." Furthermore, "the FBI and police were able to severely weaken domestic political opposition without shaking the conviction of most US people that they live in a democracy, with free speech and the rule of law."[161]

Counterintelligence agencies also use "gray propaganda" or disinformation: false or misleading information released to the press. For example, in his New Left COINTELPRO memo, Hoover ordered "[t]he use of articles from student newspapers and/or the 'underground press' to show the depravity of New Left leaders and members. In this connection, articles showing advocation of the use of narcotics and free sex are ideal to send to university officials, wealthy donors, members of the legislature and parents

of students who are active in New Left matters." COINTELPRO tried to seize any opportunity they could to attempt to marginalize radicals, regardless of whether their allegations were based in fact or not. They wrote phony letters to the editor and ordered puppet journalists to smear activists, with the goal of making reactionary attitudes seem more widespread than they were. Modern online "sock puppet" programs allow state and corporate agencies to impersonate thousands of internet users, achieving a much stronger effect.

Their approach to disinformation was sometimes petty. Hoover ordered agents to: "Be alert for opportunities to confuse and disrupt New Left activities by misinformation. For example, when events are planned, notification that the event has been cancelled or postponed could be sent to various individuals." Other dirty tricks targeted the family or employers of organizers. One letter to an activist's employer ostensibly came from a bystander who claimed to have heard the activist talking on the bus about printing off radical pamphlets at work. Both the bystander and the alleged conversation were fabricated, but the activist was fired anyway.

The corporate media constantly engages in disinformation about progressive groups as a matter of policy, even apart from any particular COINTELPRO operation. If you have tried to organize a media campaign you know that the corporate media tend to downplay coverage of progressive groups, misquote interviews, give incomplete or misleading information, and report without proper context. Some of this is intrinsic to media structure. (These issues are covered in greater detail in the Communications chapter, so I won't repeat myself here.)

It may be worth trying to counter propaganda in the mass media, especially if it's particularly nasty. But remember: the mass media doesn't thrive on nuanced and thoughtful perspectives. Corporate and state propaganda doesn't have to be sophisticated, just repetitive and aggressive.

That's especially true when resisters are equated with foreign threats or with criminals. (That's "bi-level demonization.")

Consider this 1970 television interview transcript with then California Governor (and later President) Ronald Reagan, about now-legendary resister Angela Davis:

> Reporter: Governor Reagan, would you consider Angela Davis dangerous?
>
> Reagan: Yes, she is a Communist.
>
> Reporter: Tell me Governor, how did the police department determine the guns used in the Marin County Massacre [a police shoot-out with Black Panthers] were all registered to Angela Davis?
>
> Reagan: Simple, she was a Communist.
>
> Reporter: Governor, it had been rumored that one of the weapons used was in fact a weapon recovered in an earlier raid that was never returned to Angela Davis. Is this true?
>
> Reagan: Is Angela Davis a Communist?
>
> Reporter: Thanks, Governor. Back to you, Tom.[162]

Reagan's dogged responses may seem laughable to those of us who aren't politically brain-dead. But this core approach is very effective, especially when combined with other methods of repression. Remember that Reagan didn't have to convince the majority of Americans that they should hate Angela Davis, or the Black Panthers. It was enough to cast aspersions on them so that majority of people would simply shrug when

other methods—like fabricated evidence or police assassinations—were used against the BPP.

You can fight psychological warfare in your groups by discouraging shallow rumors and mean-spirited gossip. A culture of baseless rumors or gossip is bad for our morale, and it offers fertile ground for COINTELPRO-style psychological warfare. (Agents watch for disagreements that are aired publicly or in front of informers, and then make use of those when planning psychological warfare. This is a good reason for interpersonal conflicts to be dealt with privately and tactfully.) If a significant disruptive rumor does come your way, it may be best to seek out the most accurate, verifiable information you can find and discourage others from passing on the rumor until the truth can be found out.

Any suspicious or disturbing rumor, email, letter, phone call, or other message should be investigated before action. If you hear a harmful rumor about interpersonal conflict, it's often best to get those involved to communicate personally to defuse the situation, even if doing so is uncomfortable. If you suspect a pattern of possible counterintelligence interference in your community, report this to your activist allies and friends. They may have experienced some of the same problems, and together you may be able to connect the dots.

Often those in power need merely exacerbate existing but genuine grievances between groups. We need to defuse this by dealing openly and effectively with issues of injustice and discrimination, particularly around ethnicity, gender, class, and so on, to prevent rifts from being exploited by counterintelligence agencies.

Underground and other militant groups have an important role to play, as well. It's true that liberal groups often go out of their way to condemn radical activities, which is exactly what the COINTELPRO types want. But militants do that as well. Some members of the Weather Underground and the Black Panthers celebrated militancy for the sake of militancy, needlessly

alienated potential allies, and denigrated good community work. Groups from the entire spectrum of resistance need to hold together and demonstrate solidarity—or at least refrain from publicly attacking one another—in order to fight off psychological warfare from those in power.

3. INFILTRATION AND INFORMERS

Infiltrators and informers are perhaps the most insidious and destructive of the counterintelligence agents. Their aim is both to gather information and to quietly wreak havoc on our movements from the inside.

As Brian Glick writes, “[a]gents and informers did not merely spy on political activists. Their main purpose was to discredit and disrupt. Their very presence served to undermine trust and scare off potential supporters. The FBI and police exploited this fear to smear genuine activists as agents.”[163] As discussed in the chapter on Security & Safety, this smearing is sometimes called “bad-jacketing” or “snitch-jacketing.”

Sometimes this happened through anonymous letters and rumors. Other times the police would concoct elaborate plans such as arresting an activist, putting them in a police car, and “accidentally” letting them overhear a phony radio communication that would *seem* to out someone they knew as an informer.

COINTELPRO-type tactics also disrupt movements through the use of agents provocateurs, who, as Gary Marx puts it, “encourage internal

divisiveness and lines of action that are self-defeating or not in the best interests of the organization."[164] Agents provocateurs push for reckless escalation or try to direct resistance groups into traps, or courses of action that will bring down more repression than the movement can cope with. (Brandon Darby in New Orleans did this constantly.) Indeed, the FBI seems to spend more time setting up phony "terrorist stings" than preventing any real attacks.

Infiltration was used against the American Indian Movement to devastating effect in the 1970s (after the official end of COINTELPRO). The FBI's infiltrators included a man named Douglas Durham, who wormed his way deep into the core of the organization. In addition to gathering information, Durham used bad-jacketing and other techniques of psychological disruption to fragment the group and induce a paralytic fear of infiltration.

According to John William Sayer, "[b]y 1975, AIM had become increasingly wary of its own membership, and open debate over future plans and recruitment of new members had all but ceased."[165] As leaders and core members became isolated or disconnected from new members, the movement was caught in a vicious circle of fragmentation and division. As Jules Boykoff writes: "The closing down of debate . . . leaves social movements open to charges that they are anti-democratic and run by a handful of power-hungry leaders. Ironically, once debate is crippled, and a small circle of powerful leaders emerges, groups are even more vulnerable to the work of agents provocateurs, if the agent is able to infiltrate this power circle."[166]

You might assume that intelligence reports from an infiltrator are mostly about planned actions, incriminating statements, or the like. But if you read disclosures or court documents from long-term infiltrators, you'll notice another pattern: they're absolutely full of gossip. Infiltrators write and report on who is having an argument, who is sleeping with whom, and

generally try to collect intimate psychological details on members of the community they are spying on. Long-term infiltrators are enormously costly for the state, but intelligence agencies obviously consider it a priority to gather this kind of information so that they can drive wedges between organizers or exert psychological pressure on particular people.

Warning signs of informers and infiltrators

There are several different types of infiltrators and informers. One type is the *turned activist*; someone with a genuine history as an activist who has decided to collaborate, either because of threats or bribes. Another is the *undercover professional*, a person with police or intelligence training who has been instructed to make their way into legitimate groups. This second type may also be a private investigator or the like. A third type might be someone who has gotten in trouble with the law and is trying to lighten their charges; and there are some infiltrators who don't fit tidily into any of those categories.

We can learn a lot from cases in Ontario, Canada, where multiple intelligence agencies worked together to surveil and infiltrate activist groups prior to the 2010 G20 meetings. Two of the infiltrators were sent to Guelph, Ontario, in January of 2009, a year and a half before the G20 meetings. (A third was sent to Ottawa.) Guelph likely received this attention because of radical action that had taken place there in preceding years, including Earth Liberation Front and anarchist activity.

The backstories of the two infiltrators were tailored to manipulate the sympathies of activists. Infiltrator Khalid was a person of color; when he was eventually challenged as a suspected infiltrator he "played the race card" to try to divert suspicions. Infiltrator Brenda claimed that she had moved from the UK to escape an abusive relationship. People welcomed

her into the aboveground community and respectfully avoided probing questions about her background. (Brenda also hinted at being queer.)

The infiltrators were given a list of specific organizations to infiltrate, and a list of nearly two dozen "persons of interest" involved in radical organizing. At first, organizers were surprised at the sudden arrival of new activists, older than the average in those groups, who behaved oddly. But because of their backstories and because of a desire to include people who *didn't* match the activist stereotype, the infiltrators were mostly welcomed. They ingratiated themselves into many activist groups, and developed personal relationships—often very close—with members of the community.

The infiltrators gathered huge amounts of information, thousands of pages of intelligence files and recordings of conversations at organizing meetings that included organizers from across Ontario and Quebec. This information was the foundation of the conspiracy charges laid against organizers in June 2010, and the arrests I mentioned at the start of this chapter.

When the infiltrators suddenly disappeared and the whole arrangement was revealed after mass arrests, people were deeply hurt and shocked, because many people had trusted those infiltrators. But they began to put together the pieces of what had gone wrong. I interviewed about twenty different people who had worked in the infiltrated groups and communities, including some of those who were charged and imprisoned.

Their recollections and analysis revealed warning signs and patterns. I'll mostly use Brenda and Khalid as examples here, but these are patterns that often occur with infiltrators (and informers):

Fake friendliness and poor boundaries. Brenda and Khalid sometimes seemed inappropriately friendly. They arranged a lot of social visits, but seemed to try too hard. "Fun hangouts weren't fun," one person explained to me. However, Brenda was supportive to people having tough

times, and was successful ingratiating herself that way. They were good at meeting and keeping track of new people: “Khalid always remembered names, even uncommon ones.” (At least once he correctly used the name of someone he had never met before, recognizing them from surveillance files.)

Sometimes these phony relationships are even more disturbing. Mark Kennedy, a British police infiltrator who spied on environmental activists in the UK and Europe, spent seven years undercover. During that time he had romantic and sexual relationships with a number of female activists without disclosing his identity as a police officer.[167]

Informer Brandon Darby, as Lisa Fithian writes, “was a master of manipulation, and worked both women and men. He would draw them into his sometimes-twisted perspective by cultivating them through coffee, cigarettes, alcohol, revolutionary rhetoric, emotional neediness, or his physical presence—either seductive or intimidating.” She adds: “When a group of the women in leadership challenged his behavior and asked that he stop sleeping with volunteers, he said ‘I like to fuck women, so what.’ Our concerns were disregarded.”

Lack of vouch or screening. Neither Brenda nor Khalid was formally screened or vouched for in their organizations, even when an organization *had* a screening process. Brenda attended the first meeting of one important new organization, so she was “grandfathered” in without a vouch. Khalid was initially assumed to be safe because he carried out other illegal activities involving drugs, and (falsely) claimed someone had vouched for him. This lack of screening made it easier for the infiltrators to penetrate other aboveground organizations; the infiltrators would namedrop people from Guelph to make connections in other cities. (Clearly, vouches should always be double-checked.)

Shallow knowledge. Police who are trained to be infiltrators over a few weeks or months can't achieve the depth of integrated knowledge that activists gain after many years of organizing, reading, and discussion. Brenda prepared for her task by reading a couple of books. To people around them, Brenda and Khalid appeared to have only a superficial understanding of political issues; that was at odds with their apparent level of commitment to organizing and their regular attendance at meetings. (This pattern may not apply to informers or turned activists who had legitimate experience prior to collaboration.) And while Brenda was always willing to help, she almost never contributed ideas for projects or actions.

Talented infiltrators are naturally skilled con artists, smooth and fast talkers able to conceal their shallow understanding of the issues by sounding superficially knowledgeable. They may throw out some token facts and figures without real understanding, or simply change the subject to something they feel more comfortable with.

Small inconsistencies. Infiltrators often betray themselves through minor inconsistencies that are overlooked at the time, but that seem glaring later on. Infiltrator Brenda cultivated the persona of a "pseudo-hippie" interested in animal rights. It seemed strange to some that she was so interested in the G20 and pushing confrontational demonstrations. Her style of dress didn't seem to match her persona.

Sometimes they gave conflicting personal information; Brenda gave different backstories to different people, but no one put it together until afterward. (Brenda also framed her personal history as "secret" to discourage people from comparing notes.) Khalid once spelled his own name wrong. Khalid claimed to have a wife and daughter who lived elsewhere, and also claimed to work out of town. In retrospect, he didn't have any clear reason to be living in Guelph in the first place.

Contradictions and shallow understanding come out in what people *do* as much as in what they say. Consider the case of the Arizona Five, ecodefenders arrested in 1989, where suspicions were sparked but ignored. The group was infiltrated by an FBI agent who acted as an informer and provocateur. A woman in the group went out dancing with him, and while they were walking along the road a scorpion ran over her foot. Excitedly, she pointed it out to the undercover agent. Without hesitation he crushed it. Later, she realized that she should have paid attention to this unlikely behavior from a radical environmentalist.

That UK infiltrator, Mark Kennedy, was eventually exposed when he left his real passport lying around his house.

Rich in resources without visible means of support. Khalid frequently offered help, rides in his large passenger van, a digital projector, and free printing and laminating (his lamination and photocopying, it turned out, was done at RCMP headquarters in Toronto). He frequently bought people drinks when they went out. The infiltrators always had cash, but claimed to work out of town, so no one ever saw them working. Their out-of-town "work" absences covered vacations to their real lives. But they had a lot of time; Brenda was a "super-activist" interested in every group and subcommittee, who showed up at every protest, social event, and court solidarity action.

British infiltrator Mark Kennedy was nicknamed "Flash" because he always had so much money.

Infiltrators often worm their way in by offering much-needed resources. Infiltrator Anna, in the Green Scare case of Eric McDavid, offered an entire house for their cell's use. That house was completely wired with surveillance to record the incriminating conversations that Anna bullied people into.

Suspicious behavior and absences. Brenda's apartment was oddly empty, except for a few posters. (In intelligence documents personal effects like these are referred to as "props.") Brenda never wanted to be dropped off at her apartment. This was in part because she met with her handlers for briefing and debriefing before and after attending activist events. Khalid and Brenda always had two undercover police standing by. Infiltrators may give themselves away by their need to frequently meet and communicate with handlers, and their need for poorly explained absences while they take time off. At one point Brenda rented a room in an activist's house, but only slept there a handful of times.

Deep-cover infiltrators working for a very long time have fewer unexplained absences. Mark Kennedy spent seven years in his phony persona, unusually long; reportedly his handlers lost control of him and he became a "freelancer."

Violating security culture, pushing for reckless illegal action. Infiltrators often break security culture rules by talking about things they shouldn't and by asking about things they don't need to know. They may also be prone to machismo as they try to provoke rash actions or statements they can record.

In a campaign against the urban sprawl of a new business park, Khalid would loudly (and unnecessarily) proclaim: "We're gonna stop the business park, and if it takes burning machinery, so be it." Khalid encouraged people to buy firearms which he proposed he would store in his apartment (no one took him up on the offer). He gave unsolicited advice on sabotage. He would try to get people drunk by buying them alcohol, or offering to drive them to get drugs. Paradoxically, this made some people trust him more, because they assumed a person involved with drugs or drug-dealing could not be police.

Sometimes, if a spy is an activist informer rather than a police infiltrator, such reckless behavior can be an indicator of how they were turned in the first place. Like Jake in the Green Scare (chapter 6), they may have nonpolitical criminal charges that they are trying to bargain down through police cooperation. Warning signs could include drug addiction, a tendency toward petty crime that violates security culture, or extreme debts (such as from a gambling addiction).

Remember that to acquire incriminating evidence, infiltrators typically need to wear a wire at some point, or otherwise make recordings of actions and conversations. They try to bully or intimidate people into making incriminating statements. They also want the group to do illegal things in order to justify their infiltration (and as part of larger police-state propaganda campaigns like the Green Scare). An infiltrator may not actually be wearing a recording device; they may arrange to have conversations in a place that they know to be bugged, such as the house so kindly offered by "Anna." The infiltrator may need to guide or provoke conversations that can be considered incriminating. If these things seem to be happening to the extent that you suspect someone is an informer, steer the conversation away from sensitive areas and end it as soon as possible before taking further steps as described shortly.

Disrupting the group or singling people out. Khalid would try to single people out as "leaders" even in nonhierarchical and antiauthoritarian organizations. He would single out one experienced organizer in particular; and when that organizer appeared at meetings, Khalid would proclaim: "Oh, our fearless leader! The king himself!" Brenda tried to get the same person to run for mayor. Infiltrators who want to be disruptive will often flatter people to their face and then trash-talk them when they aren't around. Disruptive infiltrators try to encourage unproductive group dynamics and trigger feelings of distrust. To draw attention away from themselves, they

might even accuse other people of being informers, manipulators, or otherwise untrustworthy.

Brandon Darby showed many of the same behaviors. Lisa Fithian writes about a training session in which Darby "insisted that one of the participants was an undercover cop and demanded that [Fithian] ask that person to leave. High drama around other people being undercover is behavior I've learned to associate with informants as a way to divert attention from them. It also breeds distrust and is destabilizing of collective efforts." Darby also "insisted on being the person in charge. He demanded a chain of command with him at the top. At one point he tried to create a central committee to ensure that only a select few would be in any position of power. This style put him out front whether it was the media or a group of volunteers who would be doing the heavy lifting while he talked."

Seizing the spotlight—or getting access to important jobs or positions—are important steps for an infiltrator who wants to disrupt.

Khalid eventually did get kicked out of the Guelph organizing community because of his generally bad behavior and because people strongly suspected him of being an infiltrator. When he was asked by a woman of color to leave, he accused her of being a racist. Because Khalid was so obviously strange, he drew attention away from Brenda, who remained until the day of the G20 protests. Organizers assumed that there would only be one police infiltrator.

After he was asked to leave, Khalid relocated to the nearby city of Kitchener-Waterloo. There he was able to get access to the activist community by claiming that he had been kicked out of Guelph because Guelph activists were racist and classist. People in Kitchener-Waterloo welcomed him in; they believed his story in part because there were some tensions about organizing style between the two communities, and a lack of strong ties and trust. Also, people in Guelph didn't publicize their fears that Khalid was an infiltrator, in part because they didn't want to accidently bad-

jacket someone. (Despite this, Khalid was exposed as an infiltrator in Kitchener-Waterloo a few weeks before the G20 protests.)

So how can aboveground organizers balance the need to recruit and welcome new people against the threat posed by infiltrators? There are important actions to consider:

Take the threat seriously, and develop active counterintelligence. When I asked those involved in Guelph about what lessons they had learned, they told me that activists need to recognize that the risk is real. "We need to take ourselves more seriously, because the state takes us seriously." Some people in Guelph who encountered the infiltrators said: "This is sketchy. But it's not my problem." But it *is* our problem, collectively. If people had talked to each other more they would have noticed inconsistencies. Some discussions took place, but they were more about venting or releasing steam over bad behavior. None of the discussions led to background checks, investigations, or other action.

Passive security culture is not enough to defeat well-funded state-run infiltration, entrapment, or systematic disruption. Communities of resistance will only be able to stop these attempts when small groups of experienced activists (who trust each other completely) join to build active counterintelligence capacity. That means studying the history of state counterintelligence and repression. That means actively gathering intelligence (as discussed in the preceding chapter) and being alert for threats. In retrospect, there were warning signs that Guelph in particular was being targeted for infiltration. (For example, before the infiltrators were assigned, police tried to recruit activists arrested at a protest near Guelph, offering money for information about activists who owned firearms.)

Building counterintelligence also means making sure that there is a process in place if infiltration is suspected, and that members of the community are alert. It also means contacting people who are experienced

and knowledgeable about the subject (perhaps, depending on your circumstances, a lawyer).

Immunize your community. Everyone in an activist community should know basic security culture and follow it. They should know not to talk to police or intelligence agents. They should know what to do and who to contact if agents knock on their doors. They should understand the potential costs of successful infiltration. And everyone should discourage gossip or spreading rumors which can feed into the intelligence database for creating social schisms. (Brenda was part of the "gossip train" and always wanted to know who was flirting, who was kissing who, and so on.)

Healthy communities of resistance find a middle ground between total inclusion of new people and reclusive paranoia. Don't be unfriendly, but don't mindlessly accept everything about people you don't know. Don't assume that a person who knows some of the same people as you is trustworthy. Be willing to ask questions about new people. This is also part of genuinely getting to know new activists and making them feel welcome and included.

"If we want to create communities of resistance, they actually have to be communities," one person from Guelph told me. "Organize with your loved ones," suggested another. Several people expressed a greater desire to recruit neighbors rather than strangers who appear out of nowhere.

It's also important that we immunize not just overtly political people, but also our families and even our neighbors. Police may knock on their doors to try to gain information about activists; we should prime them not to simply answer any questions from police.

Investigate and respond to concerns, but don't snitch-jacket. Radical communities need a process through which group members can report concerns without provoking a witch-hunt or paranoia. Snitch-jacketing is bad, but so is staying silent about real concerns. Members of the

Guelph community could probably have identified the infiltrators early if they'd shared some concerns and contradictions privately.

If an infiltrator is suspected in the group they need to be investigated by a small trusted group and dealt with rapidly. Action should be decisive but not hasty. If suspicion seems initially reasonable, the person under investigation should quietly be isolated from important information. If there are major operations pending, it may be appropriate to delay them while investigation takes place. Investigations shouldn't be announced. First of all, it's divisive and inappropriate to cast someone as a possible infiltrator without hard evidence. Second of all, if that person actually is working with the authorities, what will happen if they find out the group is aware of them? If they have yet to gather serious incriminating evidence, that informer may simply disappear. On the other hand, if they have gathered incriminating information, warning them that they might be exposed will trigger an immediate crackdown and arrests.

During an investigation (especially in aboveground groups), the organization still needs to deal directly and openly with any problems—such as divisive statements or disruptive activities—that a possible informer causes. And remember, the great majority of people who behave inappropriately in activist groups are not actually government agents, but are potentially naïve, inexperienced, confused, overly enthusiastic about public militancy, or emotionally troubled.

Investigators should look for hard evidence. The intelligence chapter discusses various methods used to investigate people such as looking into their history, supposed contacts, actions, relatives, and employment. Some groups have watched or followed suspected infiltrators to wait for them to meet with their handlers. Subtle attempts can be made to catch the suspected infiltrator out in a lie or contradiction. Consider passing on disinformation that would expose the source of a leak. Protect your investigation files and evidence carefully.

Warn others of a confirmed infiltrator and evaluate your process. If you have hard evidence that someone is an infiltrator and plan to expose them, make sure to warn your group as well as colleagues in other communities so that person can't simply relocate as Khalid did. If you can't intervene in time and people are arrested, you should still share information so others can learn from it. Some infiltrated groups will go to the media, post photos and information about the infiltrator online, and so on. (You must be *very certain* if you do these sorts of things.)

Any affected groups and people will want to take their own measures to protect themselves, such as changing locks or passwords.

A retroactive investigation needs to take place if the infiltrator found their way into sensitive groups. Was there a flaw in the screening process? Was that person's activist history genuine? Were they vouched for by another individual? Infiltrators are often introduced to a group by a disgruntled member who chooses to collaborate with the police (and then who may themselves leave the group afterward). Steps need to be taken to close the breach and prevent other infiltrators in the future. (Many of these are also potential weak points that can be investigated before the infiltrator is positively identified.)

Build a community based on mutual support for radical action, not on self-righteousness and bullying. In this world, the need for militant action is real and urgent. But no one should bully others or allow other people to be bullied into illegal action. Pep talks, encouragement, and motivational speeches are one thing. But nothing good will come from pushing someone into an action they aren't psychologically prepared for. A person bullied into action may be unable to cope with the stress involved, or with police questioning. A person coerced into high-risk action is a liability, an informer waiting to happen. Don't bully or trash-talk your comrades, and don't tolerate trash-talking.

Build strong movements and deal openly with issues of oppression. Infiltrator Khalid was able to move to a new community and new group using the excuse of race and class. But a lack of strong ties and strong communication meant that people in Kitchener-Waterloo didn't know about the infiltration concerns in Guelph.

Those groups were vulnerable in part because they didn't have the full security benefits of either the aboveground or the underground. They lacked the compartmentalization and rigid screening of successful underground groups, so the infiltrators had free access. But the vulnerable groups also lacked the *communications* channels that make aboveground groups strong, so they weren't able to respond effectively in time. (It's worth noting that Brenda and Khalid failed to access underground organizing that was happening around the same time.)

A lack of communication and a failure to address issues of oppression will make resistance movements vulnerable. True security for the aboveground comes not from being isolated, but from strengthening relationships and dialogue and from facing uncomfortable issues.

■ ■ ■

Armed underground groups have, historically, dealt with infiltrators and informers in more drastic ways. Michael Collins's neutralization of the British spy network through surgically precise violence was among the most effective (counter-) counterintelligence operations of any resistance group in history. Collins identified infiltrators and informers as a major reason Ireland's previous uprisings had failed, so his goal was to "put out the eyes" of the British intelligence system. Collins explains his rationale for the approach as a necessary extension of other parts of the Irish struggle for independence: "We took their arms and attacked their strongholds. We organised our army and met the armed patrols and military expeditions

which were sent against us in the only possible way. We met them by an organised and bold guerrilla warfare. But this was not enough. . . . England could always reinforce her army. She could replace every soldier that she lost.

"But there were others indispensable for her purposes which were not so easily replaced. To paralyse the British machine it was necessary to strike at individuals. Without her spies England was helpless. It was only by means of their accumulated and accumulating knowledge that the British machine could operate.

"Without their police throughout the country, how could they find the men they wanted? Without their criminal agents in the capital, how could they carry out that removal of the leaders that they considered essential for their victory? Spies are not so ready to step into the shoes of their departed confederates as are soldiers. . . . And even when the new spy stepped into the shoes of the old one, he could not step into the old one's knowledge."[168]

In World War II, the SOE advised resistance organizers in a typically blunt way: "If after checking and testing a man it is clear that he is a traitor, the organizer can either frighten him or pay him off (both risky) or kill him." The problem with brutal practices like kneecapping, according to veterans of European resistance, was that it left informers both able to move and talk, hardly a way to deal with a serious security risk. The SOE concluded: "The best method . . . is to prevent double crossing taking place by stressing the ruthlessness and long arm of the organization at an early stage. Although the agent only knows a few people that he can betray, his superiors are well aware of his activities and can always take vengeance."

Of course, if that precaution didn't work, according to M.R.D. Foot, "SOE's advice was—had always been, right from the start—that they were to be disposed of straight away, no shriving time allowed. No one in an SOE circuit was likely to be in a state to take and keep prisoners."[169] Resisters who didn't have the stomach for that learned the hard way:

“Notoriously, some French miliciens [Nazi paramilitaries] who were taken prisoners by maquisards . . . [and later] rescued by the Germans, went round the local villages afterwards and pointed out to their Gestapo companions the men who had saved their lives: conduct only to be expected of Gestapo narks.”[170] It doesn’t take much imagining to picture the tortures and death that befell the merciful maquisards (and likely, their families).

Various resistance groups have been quite brutal when dealing with informers and infiltrators. I wrote in the security chapter about the practice used by some South African militants of burning collaborators alive with a tire and gasoline. The original IRA typically shot informers, although some were tarred and feathered before being tied to church railings as a warning.

There are obvious problems with this approach. The moral issues are profound. Historical resistance movements who killed infiltrators did so because they felt that they were saving lives. But this approach can also go horrifyingly wrong very quickly, especially if COINTELPRO agents use bad-jacketing to turn activists against each other.

The murder of Anna Mae Aquash is a heartbreaking example. A brilliant activist and organizer by all accounts, Aquash worked with the American Indian Movement for years. Probably because she was so effective, she was targeted for bad-jacketing by infiltrators in AIM. The exact details and people involved are heavily disputed, but the outcome is clear: Anna Mae Aquash was abducted and murdered, seemingly by AIM members who were supposed to be her comrades.[171] Her murder left two young daughters as orphans. No one can bring her back, or heal the damage to her family and her community. Remember that.

4. THE LEGAL SYSTEM

Those in power use the legal system to attack resisters through politically motivated arrests, interrogations, and criminalization. According to Glick, as part of COINTELPRO the "FBI and police abused the legal system to harass dissidents and make them appear to be criminals. Officers of the law gave perjured testimony and presented fabricated evidence as a pretext for false arrests and wrongful imprisonment. They discriminatorily enforced tax laws and other government regulations and used conspicuous surveillance, 'investigative' interviews, and grand jury subpoenas in an effort to intimidate activists and silence their supporters."[172] (Such things go hand in hand with psychological warfare operations more generally.)

Jules Boykoff explains: "Dissidents are arrested for minor charges that are often false, and that are sometimes based on obscure statutes that have remained on the books, buried and dormant but nevertheless vessels for legal persecution. Harassment arrests can have a devastating effect. Such charges, even if false, thrust dissidents into legal labyrinths that consume social-movement resources, divert activists from the social-change goals, undermine morale of social-movement participants, and discourage support from potential recruits or bystander publics, as these groups often tense up at the possibility of consorting with alleged criminals."[173]

Boykoff cites a particular FBI order to target civil rights activists: "An internal FBI memo from 1968 lavished praise on the Philadelphia Field Office for its success in having local dissidents 'arrested on every possible charge until they could no longer make bail' and therefore 'spent most of the summer in jail.' In another internal memo, FBI agents were counseled

that because the purpose of such harassment charges ‘is to disrupt’ that ‘it is immaterial whether facts exist to substantiate the charge.’”[174]

This approach was not a new innovation of the 1960s, of course. In the Groups and Organization chapter we discussed how mass arrests of members of the Industrial Workers of the World in the early 1920s drained the resources of the organization. The FBI used the same approach to try to empty the coffers of the Black Panthers.

Drug use and apolitical crimes can make activists more vulnerable to harassment from the legal system. J. Edgar Hoover ordered the following: “Since the use of marijuana and other narcotics is widespread among members of the New Left, you should be alert to opportunities to have them arrested by local authorities on drug charges. Any information concerning the fact that individuals have marijuana or are engaging in a narcotics party should be immediately furnished to local authorities and they should be encouraged to take action.”[175]

Sometimes legal system harassment takes the form of show trial or public spectacle. “Are you, or have you ever been, a member of the Communist Party?” as Senator Joseph McCarthy demanded of those called before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). HUAC didn’t need to prove anything or even legally charge or prosecute people. Their powers were sufficient to permanently blacklist people from employment or public service. Without any oversight or accountability they were able to destroy careers, families, and lives (including suicides resulting from HUAC persecution).[176]

In the current US climate, the grand jury fills an analogous role. Activists may be called before a grand jury and compelled to testify. They have no right to a lawyer, nor to cross-examine witnesses. The “jury” is not screened for bias. Those who refuse to answer questions about themselves or allies—asserting their theoretical right to silence—can be arbitrarily punished and imprisoned for their noncooperation.

These grand juries go hand in hand with the extreme laws, like the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, which equate nonviolent economic sabotage with armed terrorism in the law. They also allow for extreme punishments, including lengthy jail sentences and isolation for those convicted. (For a detailed look at how grand juries and extraordinary laws have been used against radical environmentalists and animals rights activists, see Will Potter's excellent book, and blog, *Green is the New Red*.)

Such extreme laws usually remain on the books indefinitely, to be used whenever popular discontent wells up. Alexander Cockburn writes: "Emergency laws lie around for decades like rattlesnakes in summer grass."[177] They also lay groundwork for more openly authoritarian forms of population control and martial law.

When faced with harassment through the legal system, activists need legal help and they need solidarity. The first form of solidarity is to *say nothing* to police or the courts when questioned, to *stay silent* and *refuse to give information* (especially information about our comrades). Police use all kinds of tricks to try to convince people to talk when they should stay silent.

If faced with criminal charges, resisters need legal help. The different types of legal attacks, differing legal contexts in various countries, and the vast quantity of precedents and legislation mean that I won't discuss legal tactics here. That's what lawyers are for, and thankfully there are many progressive and radical lawyers doing good work for communities of resistance around the world. (And some resisters facing significant jail time, from the ANC to the Green Scare, have chosen to go underground as fugitives rather than try to engage in a legal battle.)

Any effective movement will bring down repression and that means prison time, especially for dedicated organizers and frontline activists. Prisoner solidarity is absolutely critical. "A movement that doesn't support prisoners is a sham movement," as Sara Falconer explained to me (paraphrasing political prisoner Ojore Lutalo). Fortunately, there is a

resurgence in prisoner solidarity in North America, in part a response to the very kind of repression noted above.

There are a great many prisoners hungry for outside contact. You can get lists of their cases and mailing addresses online to write them a letter. (The website of Denver Anarchist Black Cross is a great place to start: denverabc.wordpress.com.)

A benefit of doing prisoner solidarity work is that it helps to demystify prison. Prison can be a frightening thing, but talking to current and former political prisoners helps people to understand that prison time doesn't mean the end of the world. It's a risk that serious activists routinely face; resisters should learn about it so they can decide for themselves whether it's a risk they are willing to take.

Current and former prisoners can also offer a lot of useful tips on coping with incarceration. (I've compiled some of those in Further Resources.)

5. ILLEGAL VIOLENCE

When their manipulation of the so-called "justice system" is not enough, counterintelligence agencies move on to extra-judicial violence and coercion. According to Brian Glick: "The FBI and police threatened, instigated, and themselves conducted break-ins, vandalism, assaults, and beatings. The object was to frighten dissidents and disrupt their movements. In the case of radical Black and Puerto Rican activists (and later Native Americans), these attacks—including political assassinations—were so

extensive, vicious, and calculated that they can accurately be termed a form of official 'terrorism.'"[178]

Physical violence is always part of the arsenal of repression. In many parts of the world—at many points in history—authoritarians have not bothered with the subtleties of long-term surveillance, or the manipulation of social and political schisms. They simply apply violence directly; beatings, torture, and murder.

Sometimes the counterintelligence agencies try to provoke internecine violence instead of using it themselves. The Cairo Gang, sent by the British in 1920 to target the IRA, planned to assassinate high-ranking officials in the aboveground Sinn Féin, and then blame it on the IRA to create the impression of a battle between Irish moderates and extremists. The Lord Mayor of Cork was actually murdered in this fashion, but the Irish people saw through the ploy and refused to fall for it.

Violent attacks on resistance groups don't necessarily come from governments alone. Oftentimes, governments will encourage that violence from other parties by actively facilitating it or simply allowing it to happen. The police in the South routinely helped the KKK during the civil rights era. Fascists often take this approach, as well, encouraging the development of fascist gangs or paramilitary groups

I wrote in chapter 3 about Judi Bari, the environmentalist, feminist, and labour leader working in Northern California. She was an organizer with Earth First! in their campaigns to stop logging of ancient redwood forests, and also organized through the Industrial Workers of the World to try to bring timber workers and environmentalists together.[179] In 1990, she was organizing for Redwood Summer, a national campaign of civil disobedience against that logging.[180]

On May 24, 1990, a motion-activated pipe bomb exploded in Bari's car; it nearly killed her and also injured her colleague Darryl Cherney. The pipe bomb, wrapped in nails, was located under Bari's seat. The FBI and

Oakland Police arrested them within minutes and publicly claimed that they were “terrorists,” injured when their own bomb accidentally went off. For months, the FBI and the police held press conferences in which they released further claims about the guilt of Bari and Cherney, while simultaneously carrying out a sham “investigation.”

While this was going on, the timber industry created and distributed fake Earth First! press releases and pamphlets supposedly signed by Cherney. These materials advocated attacks on timber industry workers, community members, and the media.[181] Local media and some national media reported the phony materials as real. This was a form of psychological warfare designed to turn the public against Earth First! and provoke fear and anger in the public. (Some media saw through the fakes, noting that the language “read like a bad Hollywood version of what radicals talk like” and that Cherney’s name was misspelled.)

The FBI and police “investigations” continued for two months, during which they overlooked obvious real evidence and fabricated new evidence to support their case. There were obvious logical inconsistencies in the case. Why would Bari, who had previously received death threats that she reported to police, carry a motion-activated pipe bomb under her own seat? The lack of real evidence meant that the district attorney refused to file criminal charges against the two activists.

If the FBI did try to kill Bari by bombing her, it wouldn’t be the first time they’ve used that tactic. In Seattle in 1970, the FBI recruited war veteran David Sannes to help with an investigation. But Sannes turned whistleblower when he realized the plan was to lure in a radical activist and then blow them up and blame the explosion on the victim. In a radio interview he stated that “[m]y own knowledge is that the FBI along with other federal law enforcement agencies has been involved in a campaign of bombing, arson and terrorism in order to create in the mass public mind a connection between political dissidence of whatever stripe and

revolutionaries of whatever violent tendencies."[182] That same year, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee leader Ralph Featherstone was killed by a bomb in his car. The FBI claimed that he was transporting a bomb, but colleagues say that was nonsense and later drew parallels between his case and that of Judi Bari.[183]

Indeed, some of the same people were associated with both bombings. The investigation into Bari and Cherney's bombing was led by FBI San Francisco director Richard W. Held, son of Richard G. Held. Both of the Helds were prominently involved in the original COINTELPRO apparatus. The senior Held is associated with the murder of Black Panthers Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, while the junior allegedly framed Panther Geronimo Pratt on murder charges.[184] A year after the bombing, Bari and Cherney filed a civil rights lawsuit against the FBI and police to clear their names. Richard W. Held was named in the suit.

Judi Bari died of breast cancer in 1997. To this day, no one knows for sure who actually planted the bomb. What is clear is that the FBI failed to investigate the event, preferring to fabricate evidence to frame Bari and Cherney. In 2002, a federal jury confirmed this by returning a guilty verdict against six FBI and police defendants in Bari and Cherney's civil lawsuit, and ordered a settlement of $4.4 million. It's tragic that Bari didn't live to see that vindication.

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The state has the ability to mobilize overwhelming violence at any particular point. This capacity is greater than what a movement can defend against at a fixed position. To deal with this, aboveground and underground groups use divergent strategies to cope with extralegal violence.

Both aboveground and underground groups can build their organizational strength, solidarity, and mutual aid to increase resilience in

the face of state violence. Communities of resistance need to be built such that support can be offered to those targeted by violence, and to their families.

Both kinds of organizations also need to structure themselves so that they don't depend on one or two critical people (which is also part of good succession planning). If you have unique skills or knowledge, you should try to share that knowledge and teach other people. Some organizations will have a "deputy" or "understudy" for people in key roles, to learn what that person does so they can step in. With these approaches, if a group loses someone (due to an arrest or a violent attack) the group can continue to function.

And both groups should engage in good security practices (beyond mere security culture) if people believe they are likely to be targeted for attack by those in power. This might include bodyguards, sentries, searches for planted bombs and booby traps, changing travel routes or meeting places frequently, watching for tails and, if necessary, going underground for a time.

There are differences between aboveground and underground groups, of course. Aboveground groups in particular need to use state violence to maximize public support and sympathy. This means using the media (both mass and alternative) and other means to expose the wide use of violence and drum up support, the way that civil rights activists did in Birmingham when children were attacked by police dogs and fire hoses.

Underground groups can't garner media sympathy very effectively. So they protect themselves from state violence by being hidden, mobile, and engaging in solid counterintelligence.

It may be tempting to use arms or militant language and posturing as a defensive deterrent to state violence. This is what the Black Panthers did, but it's a double-edged sword. As Curtis J. Austin wrote on the BPP's use of arms: "It cannot be overstated how the group's readiness for battle kept

alive many of its members across the country. At the same time, it obviously increased police fear to the point of hysteria."[185] Militant posturing can make police attacks seem justified to some members of the public. Any group that wants to use arms as a deterrent must be very careful in considering their larger context and strategy.

This deterrent is likely to be more effective in certain situations; for example, when there is significant public sympathy for the resisters; when the threat comes not from the state but from vigilante groups like the KKK; when the resisters have established that they are not afraid to use arms and are skilled in their use; or when groups are highly mobile and can make their opponent hesitate before they slip away.

Of course, the deterrent isn't always passive; many resistance groups have used their arms for retribution in the hopes of deterring future attacks. But since the state can muster so much violence for its own reprisals, this requires that resisters have the capacity to decisively escalate any retribution *in conjunction* with other strategies of mass mobilization. Otherwise they risk becoming trapped in an escalating cycle of violence they will be unable to cope with.

Not all state violence is directed specifically at movement organizers, of course. The police, and other agents of state violence, will attack without provocation. The past few years have made this abundantly clear; we've seen example after high-profile example of police killing unarmed people of color, especially Black people. State repression is not limited to the formal leaders of resistance; illegal violence is a way to terrorize every member of an oppressed group, of maintaining the dominance of those in power.

Black Lives Matter is a critical example of an organization that has struggled—very effectively—against that violence. Black Lives Matter has employed many of the most important strategies and organizing approaches we've explored in this book. They've built strong grassroots groups and

alliances. They've used disruptive and confrontational tactics in combination with clear outreach and communication. Their continued work and innovation will offer all movements lessons to learn.

6. MARTIAL LAW AND POPULATION CONTROL

Once a resistance movement is large and successful enough, those in power may impose martial law or other counterinsurgency methods. Witness the walls and perpetual checkpoints in Palestine, or the series of detention camps the British used against the Mau Mau in Kenya. Or look at the Nazi concentration camps, or the Bantustans in South Africa, or the checkpoints in any totalitarian country.

Population control measures are intended to hamper the resistance and separate its members from their supporters in the general population. Ian Beckett, writing about the Boer War between South African settlers and the British Empire, explains: "The Boer ability to maneuver was restricted progressively by the building of lines of blockhouses and barbed-wire fences across the South African veld. Boer farms and livestock were systematically destroyed; Boer women and children were incarcerated in concentration camps to deprive the commandos of any possible support or supplies."[186] He notes that much of the same approach was used by the Spanish in Cuba, and the United States in the Philippines.

The US Counterinsurgency Field Manual explains: “Population control includes determining who lives in an area and what they do.”[187] Population control measures suggested by that manual include:

- Census and identification cards.
- Curfews.
- A pass system (e.g., travel permits).
- Limits on the length of time people can travel.
- Limits on the number of visitors from outside areas combined with a requirement to register them with local security forces or civil authorities.
- Checkpoints along major routes to monitor and enforce compliance with population control measures.[188]

Martial law or state of emergency legislation may increase police or executive powers, decrease civil rights, and lower legal barriers for arrest, detention, or imprisonment. These powers are used to persecute resistance sympathizers and dissidents of all stripes.

This sort of thing may seem irrelevant to organizers in privileged parts of the world. And perhaps in the decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall it seemed like these sorts of things were on the way out. But we have seen a rise in authoritarianism and xenophobia around the world. And we have seen a backlash against free movement, immigrants, and refugees, especially against the growing number of people escaping from crises caused by colonialism and climate change (like the civil war in Syria).

Further, those of us who have privilege because of where we were born or the color of our skin must remember how population controls like border walls, travel passes, and repressive violence still affect many people—and perhaps a growing number of people—around the world. The situation in Palestine is one prominent example. But the borders of many rich countries have become increasingly militarized, and immigrants or refugees subject to prolonged detention—long before Trump, immigrant advocates warned of a “Fortress North America.”

And if you want to talk about detention, curfews, and travel passes, let's talk about the prison system. In the United States, about one in thirty-one adults are under some form of "correctional control"—in prison, on parole, or on probation. But that ratio is one in eleven for Black adults in the United States. And for young Black men that has been as high as one in three in some cities.[189] It's an insidious form of racialized martial law that affects many racialized people, and it's virtually invisible for many people of privilege. (For more on that, check out Michelle Alexander's book *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.)

Population control measures serve three purposes. First of all, they hamper the movement of resistance members (perhaps even tracking and identifying them). Second, they serve to harass and intimidate resistance supporters and sympathizers. And third, they intimidate members of the public and force them to change their lives to accommodate the desires of those in power. Japanese internment camps in North America in World War II probably didn't stop any saboteurs, but they did intimidate people of Asian backgrounds while the US government confiscated the assets, businesses, and property of the detainees. Often population control methods are "security theater" and allow governments to flex their muscles and project authoritarian power with the goal of cowing people into compliance.

Faced with such measures, resistance movements have several options. Aboveground resistance movements and their allies can use the repression to gain support from the general population, appealing to shared public concerns like privacy, freedom of movement, genuine security, and so on. If possible, a campaign of civil disobedience could be organized against population control measures, and registration materials could be destroyed. Sometimes aboveground groups respond by becoming more clandestine. The underground must organize its own countermeasures, which has traditionally included the forgery of identification cards and travel papers

and efforts to bypass checkpoints, as well as initiatives to smuggle persecuted people and resistance members past checkpoints.

7. SELECTIVE CONCESSIONS AND CO-OPTATION

If other efforts to smother resistance fail, those in power may resort to selective concessions or co-optation. That is, those in power *appear* to give in or concede to some demands of the resistance; or they co-opt or incorporate some of those demands into their own platform.

The distinction between the concessions and co-optation is not always clear. During the Great Depression, as poor people's movements raged, President Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced a sweeping set of social programs dubbed the New Deal, which offered relief payments for the poor and unemployed. On one hand, it was a concession to demands of vigorous social movements—a win. On the other hand, it was a way of directing popular support and momentum into the base of the Democratic Party, giving them an edge over the Republicans for nearly a generation.

Winning concessions is not the same as victory. But forcing concessions in an imperfect system can be a valuable way of making concrete progress and building momentum.

The biggest danger is when those in power try to co-opt the language and causes of a movement in order to undermine it. The full name of the

Nazi Party under Hitler was the National Socialist German Workers' Party; of course the party was virulently capitalist, not socialist, and as soon as it was in power it did whatever it could to smash unions and undermine workers' rights. Which is exactly the danger of co-opted language.

As a counterintelligence method, concessions are meant to internally divide resistance movements—to create fracture lines between resisters with different thresholds for success. Sometimes the concessions are intended to present a veneer of change. Sometimes those in power attempt to co-opt part of the resistance cause in order to confuse their supporters and pull the rug out from under the movement. (Counterintelligence expert Frank Kitson advised governments to use the "judicious promise of concessions" combined with force while insisting that "most of the concessions can only be implemented once . . . life . . . returns to normal."[190])

It's the old divide and conquer.

Some feel that the British treaty with Ireland at the end of the War of Independence—which deliberately excluded Northern Ireland—was an intentional move to divide the nascent republic. If so, it worked; a terrible civil war in Ireland followed the treaty signing.

Those in power may offer selective deals to prisoners or prisoners of war, knowing that if a few prisoners give in the group's solidarity will break. Nelson Mandela was offered a deal by President Botha for a conditional release in 1985. But Botha wanted him to renounce armed struggle. Mandela refused to agree, and furthermore, refused any deal that would let him out of jail while his fellow political prisoners remained behind bars. "Only free men can negotiate," he declared. "Prisoners cannot enter into contracts."

Concessions may also be a theatrical measure to undermine a movement's outside support. Michael Collins wrote that Britain's peace offer to the IRA happened because the Crown's "relationships with foreign

countries were growing increasingly unhappy, the recovery of world opinion was becoming—in fact, had become—indispensable. Ireland must be disposed of by means of a generous peace. If Ireland refused that settlement, we could be shown to be irreconcilables. Then, Britain would again have a free hand for whatever further actions were necessary 'to restore law and order' in a country that would not accept the responsibility of doing so for itself."[191] Further, he cautioned shortly after the treaty, "This movement by the British Cabinet did not indicate any real change of heart on the part of Britain towards Ireland. Any stirrings of conscience were felt only by a minority."[192] The British concessions happened only because of the use of political force by Irish resisters.

Sometimes the offer of concessions or negotiations is simply tricks designed to put the resistance off their guard. How many times has a threatened colonial power offered negotiations to a resisting Indigenous or enslaved group, only to capture and murder the leaders when they show up to talk?

Often, in more liberal countries, concession offers lead to prolonged periods of "consultation" and phony negotiation. Governments undermine us by trying to flatter us, or to make us feel like part of the process. They want us to direct our energies into nonthreatening and time-consuming government procedures. But resistance movements win by causing disruption of business as usual, and by seizing the initiative—not by letting those in power dictate terms and timetables. They win by taking their issues to the streets, not by sitting politely in town halls. That doesn't mean movements should never participate in consultations. But if consultations are a sign that governments are willing to concede something, we need to *increase* our protest and disruption. If we decrease it, then those in power learn that we will give in, be silent, and go away.

The US Field Manual on Counterinsurgency suggests that "[s]killful counterinsurgents can deal a significant blow to an insurgency by

appropriating its cause." Although the authors caution that these causes are sometimes complex and vary from area to area, an effective counterinsurgency operation "must address the legitimate grievances insurgents use to generate popular support."[193]

Indeed, co-optation has been perhaps *the* technique of choice used against promising mass movements in the affluent world in recent decades. Much of the environmental movement has been appropriated or rendered toothless by greenwashing and the semantic obliteration of ideas like "sustainability." The management of many labour unions have been similarly co-opted. During the Great Depression (as *Poor People's Movements* discussed), many relief organizations were hamstrung and dissolved after being co-opted. Those in power can try to co-opt almost any cause with a bit of money and help from some willing liberals.

Responding to concessions and co-optation is far more difficult and complex than dealing with overt attacks. Unlike in the other cases, those in power may actually be giving the resistance what they want. They may only offer small concessions, and it's unlikely that they offer it out of a real change of heart. But this is still an indicator of success by the resistance movement. And, depending on the nature of the concessions, many people in the movement will be tempted to accept them and stop fighting.

To counter the cynical use of concessions resisters must maintain solidarity. Whenever possible, groups should avoid accepting concessions or negotiating without consulting allies.

Stratfor's Divide and Conquer

The divide and conquer approach has been used by public relations firms for decades. Pagan International (Stratfor's precursor) targeted grassroots organizers boycotting Nestlé in the 1980s.

Founder Rafael D. Pagan, a US military intelligence veteran, explained that their goal "must be to separate the fanatic activist leaders . . . from the overwhelming majority of their followers: decent, concerned people who are willing to judge us on the basis of our openness and usefulness," and to strip radicals of their alliances with other groups.[194]

Pagan also applied this in campaigns for oil companies doing business in apartheid South Africa; they tried to divide anti-apartheid activists from supportive religious communities, and to split apart alliances. Eventually their plan was exposed, clients fled, and Pagan International went bankrupt in 1990.

Afterward, executives from the defunct firm went on to form other PR companies that eventually merged into Stratfor. And, twenty years after Pagan was exposed, Stratfor was giving the same kinds of advice for oil companies in the tar sands.

The formula used by Strafor and other PR companies, according to both public statements and leaked documents, is to divide movements into four overlapping parts—radicals, idealists, realists, and opportunists—each of whom can be dealt with in different ways:[195]

Radicals are committed to fundamental change; they are the "fanatic activist leaders." They want "social justice and political empowerment" and "see the multinational corporation as inherently evil."[196] The radicals are seen as the most dangerous to those in power, because they cannot be bought off or bamboozled, and because they are after *long-term* change they don't give up easily after a defeat. Radicals can only be neutralized by isolating them from their supporters and the rest of the movement.

Idealists believe in a moral position for its own sake; they want to see "a perfect world." Stratfor sees them as altruistic but "naïve." Idealists have credibility with the public because of their pure altruism—that's especially powerful when they ally with radicals. But the idealist

belief in perfection is also their vulnerability. Stratfor and other PR companies target this by trying to muddy the waters (for example: “It’s better to get oil from Canada than the Middle East. If you oppose tar sands oil, you’re supporting human rights violations in Saudi Arabia!”). The purpose is to confuse idealists, to make perfection seem unattainable, and to convert idealists into “realists.”

Realists, in the vernacular of Stratfor, are those most willing to compromise with the establishment. They want superficial change, rather than deep change. They are a type of liberal, who can be treated “seriously” and pitched against the radicals and idealists. The Stratfor approach is to co-opt “realist” activists and groups; to make them participants in phony coalitions to give a social change veneer to business as usual.

Opportunists are people who want personal gain like money or fame. Some of them mostly want a job (in public policy or nonprofits) while others are real activists who pursue popularity and shallow “wins.” Opportunists tend to change their position with changing trends; they’ll keep to a liberal approach if that will bring respect or donor dollars, but they may switch to a more militant approach if there is a groundswell of public outrage. The Stratfor approach is to buy them off, either by giving them a job or by giving them an easy, superficial concession knowing that they (along with the “realists”) will lose interest and move on.

These categories are imperfect. But we use them to understand how those in power try to dismantle our movements.

We can also take these same categories and invert the Stratfor approach. We can ask: “How do we handle each of these categories to make a movement stronger?”

For **radicals**, it’s straightforward. Radicals have the strongest commitment to real change; our goal must be to *connect* them to other parts of the movement. (Only isolation can defeat radicals.) **Idealists**

have to be turned into radicals, by connecting them to vibrant resistance movements and a tradition of action that has brought about genuine change (if not a perfect world).

Realists must be made to understand that the only "real" pathway to lasting progress is through radical change; there can be intermediate stepping-stones on the way to victory, but ultimately success will only come from uprooting entrenched systems of power.

Opportunists are the most dangerous for resistance movements, because they sometimes use radical or militant language, but are actually fickle and prone to selling out. Their worst tendencies must be limited and contained. Opportunists are attracted to positions of unaccountable power, so we should make sure that grassroots movements make participatory decisions. And we should build deep movements with long-term strategy and radical goals.

It's rather like being in a large group of people who are arrested for political reasons. As long as you stay together, refuse to give information, and refuse to make individual deals, you may get released. But as soon as a few people give up, others will follow, and group solidarity disintegrates.

Framing an appropriate response in the media is also important. For example, if a government publicly offers a partial concession—"We're willing to give financial compensation to those poisoned by fracking"—resistance movements should not celebrate prematurely. Rather, they need to keep their eyes on the prize and talk about the ultimate issue: "We're glad that the government has accepted that fracking is harmful, but money can't restore health—we still need a full ban on fracking to protect people and the land."

To cope with concessions-as-disruption, a movement also needs to be in some general agreement on what winning actually looks like. What is the goal the resistance movement is struggling for? A lack of clear goals will

lead to needless conflict. Groups and movements must take the time to discuss and understand what it means for them to win.

The issue of co-optation is complex and addressing it requires a viable long-term strategy. If those in power actually agree to a demand, what is the next step? Resistance groups often have multiple and complex causes. Those causes need to be integrated into a viable long-term strategy. Those in power shouldn't be able to pull the rug out from under your group simply by agreeing to a demand or creating a depoliticized version of your own efforts. Have your next move planned in advance.

Dealing with success requires more long-term thinking and conflict-resolution skills than dealing with overt attacks. Counterintelligence and repression can't be addressed piecemeal. We will only be able to cope with such attacks on our movements if we come to understand our adversary's strategies for repression, and counteract them accordingly.

We also have to understand how repression affects our ability to sustain our movements. Many of the repressive techniques in this chapter are about separating the combatants or frontline activists in a movement from their base of support. Once that happens, activists can be starved of the resources they need to fight.

To win, we must overcome repression and build the strong support base that viable movements require to fund and sustain themselves. (And we have to overcome traps like the "Nonprofit Industrial Complex" which use external funding to undermine resisters.) That's the subject we turn to in the next chapter: Logistics & Fundraising.

CHAPTER 10

Logistics & Fundraising

“Amateurs study strategy. Professionals study logistics.”
—Military saying

VIETNAMESE LOGISTICS

Vietnam, 1966. The people of Vietnam have been fighting foreign invaders for two thousand years, since the Trung sisters mobilized an army to drive back a Chinese invasion in the year 40 CE. But by 1966 Vietnam has been occupied for a quarter-century, first by the Japanese and then by the French, both of which were defeated and forced to abandon their occupations.

Now it is the Americans who have invaded and occupied the southern portion of the country. Their military might is colossal and represents far more firepower than all past invaders combined. With a constant influx of planes, helicopters, aircraft carriers, missiles, and bombers, they appear almost invincible. The Americans have vast military infrastructure, with enormous ships, airfields, and city-sized bases.

All this infrastructure, all these forces, must be kept supplied. Within a year of the invasion an immense logistical trail stretches from the United States to its bases within Vietnam. Each month, 770,000 tons of supplies are

brought in to supply the “police action,” and almost 10 percent of that amount is ammunition. The army consumes ten million field rations and thirty million liters of gasoline and oil each month. Each soldier uses more than 150 kilograms of supplies per day, including food, fuel, clothing, and ammo. Big-ticket items like vehicles are also being shipped in and replaced —a plane is lost about once per day.[197]

If each American soldier consumes 150 kg of supplies each day, then a twelve-man squad consumes 1,800 kg of supplies in a day, or fifty-four thousand tons a month. If you want to visualize this, picture an army jeep loaded down with 350 kg of supplies. To supply the squad, a jeep like this would have to arrive 154 times a month—more than five times a day, light or dark, rain or shine. (If you want to picture the entire American supply flow, picture an endless string of these jeeps driving single file, speeding past you at a rate of almost one per second, twenty-four hours a day.)

Vietnamese guerrillas, on the other hand, are armed with very little. They have a few weapons seized in the past from Japanese or French occupiers. But mostly they must steal arms from the Americans or make their own weapons. They subsist on rice, sometimes with a bit of fish or frog or other protein. Other than food, the average North Vietnamese fighter consumes only a few *ounces* of supplies each day.[198] Their entire force could be supplied several times over with the materiel used by a single American division.[199]

They don’t have an industrial economy. But they do have the land. And so they dig. Tunnels had been dug to fight the French and the Japanese. The tunnels are expanded and extended. Some of the tunnels are little more than village bomb shelters to protect peasants from napalm and aerial bombardment. These are enlarged and interconnected—whole villages are moved underground. By the end of the war, the village of Vinh Moc is nearly a hundred feet underground. Every time they are bombed, they rebuild and dig deeper and deeper in the thick clay.

The tunnels are most extensive in the area of Cu Chi, northwest of Saigon, less than one hundred kilometers north of the Mekong River Delta. By the end of the war, there will be hundreds of kilometers of tunnels in Cu Chi, some extending right underneath and into American bases. The biggest of the tunnels are large enough to hide water buffalo. The smallest outlying tunnels are only about thirty inches wide by thirty inches high. The ceilings are rounded, the entrances concealed behind disguised trapdoors.[200] American soldiers can't even squeeze into the tunnels with their gear on. Their rifles are so long that once they have entered a narrow tunnel they can't swing the guns around to point in the opposite direction.

The tunnel networks contain most of the forward infrastructure of the National Liberation Front. They encompass bomb shelters, sleeping chambers, hospitals, kitchens, bathrooms, storerooms and rice caches, theaters, conference rooms, and temporary graveyards. There are armories, forges, and weapons factories.[201] In these underground factories, the NLF manufacture the weapons they need to defend their people and the land.

They capture rifles and then reverse-engineer them to manufacture copies by hand. They scrounge and steal whatever they can—they even capture a working tank and bury the whole thing under six feet of soil. It has working batteries and lights, so they use it as an underground command post.[202] But mostly they rely on the wasteful American logistics system, on what Americans throw away. The NLF salvage silk from parachutes for improvised gas masks filled with fine charcoal.[203] They make their own grenades using tins discarded by American soldiers. To make a grenade they fill a tomato juice tin with explosives, and then put that tin in a larger beer or Coca-Cola can. They fill the space between with road gravel to make shrapnel.[204]

Explosives are the hardest to scrounge. The Americans don't just leave those lying around—but they do throw tens of thousands of bombs from aircraft every day, raining down onto rice paddies, forests, and villages. Not

all of those bombs detonate. Trained observers watch the bombing runs, note where each bomb falls, and mark a map when a bomb fails to explode. A special munitions salvage team is sent out to dismantle the dud, to cut it open with handsaws and gently extract the explosives. They can make many grenades and booby traps with the explosives in one undetonated bomb. But if something goes wrong, there will be nothing left of the salvage team to bury.[205]

The North Vietnamese don't have aircraft carriers and satellites, but they have their own ingenuity and relentless hard work. They scavenge everything they can, put every scrap of American garbage into the war effort. Even the bomb craters left by the B-52s, which fill with water in the rainy season, are used as duck or fish ponds, increasing the amount of scarce protein available.

Life in the tunnels is very difficult. There are ventilation shafts, but they are few and carefully hidden. The main trapdoors are all closed during the day, and by midafternoon it feels like the oxygen has all been used up. The people living in the tunnels lie belly-down, with their faces propped in the space between their arms, trying to remain motionless and breathe in a bit of cool air from close to the ground. Extreme humidity causes skin infections and spoils food. Latrine and washing facilities are very poor.

Once the Americans find out about the tunnels they try constantly to destroy them. In the underground hospitals, salvaged parachutes are suspended from the ceiling to stop soil from falling onto patients during surgery when the tunnels are shaken by bombs or tanks overhead. If Americans pass near the tunnel entrances, Vietnamese guerrillas fire on them from hidden sniping holes, or throw grenades at their tanks. If US soldiers try to enter the tunnel, it is the task of the guerrilla to draw them farther in, to lure them deep underground where they will set off improvised mines or stumble into pits filled with sharpened bamboo sticks.

The Americans train special squads to enter the tunnels, they inject poison gas into the entrances, they fill them with fuel and explosives and blow them up. But it doesn't work. The tunnel networks are too vast and too compartmentalized to be disabled by piecemeal attacks. The Americans come to realize this.

Eventually the American army decides to obliterate the ecology above the tunnels—to make it impossible for the guerrillas to feed themselves and move around aboveground. They spray Agent Orange from thousands of aircraft to kill the vegetation. They bulldoze, burn, and bomb the villages and forests into ash and dust.[206] In some places they use helicopters to plant a specially bred "American grass" that burns well. A cloud of B-52 bombers converts Cu Chi into a moonscape.

By 1971, many of the guerrillas are near starvation. The logistical resources of the NLF are strained just to keep people alive, to cope with the military and ecological onslaught. But they need very little to fight.

US troops are well-supplied, and in the end, that's part of what defeats them. The US supply needs are enormous and endless. Despite their tremendous military superiority—or, perhaps, *because* of it—the US army is forced to withdraw. They have been bled dry physically, psychologically, economically, and logistically. Vietnam throws out one more occupier.[207]

■ ■ ■

Conflict can be exciting and dramatic, but winners are made by logistics as much as strategy or tactics.

It does not matter what kind of campaign is underway, whether it is an armed underground movement or a strictly nonviolent struggle. Anyone who dedicates their life or time to struggle—no matter what kind—needs to eat, needs a place to sleep, needs to be able to move to areas of conflict, needs certain basic tools and services.

For the Montgomery Bus Boycott in the civil rights struggle, logistical support meant arranging carpools and replacing shoes that had worn out from walking countless miles. For blockades in mass civil disobedience it means ensuring that food is served on blockade lines, that legal and jail support is available for arrestees, that pamphlets and literature are on hand to distribute. For armed resistance movements, it has meant supplying ammunition, concealment, and medical aid. Adequate logistical support can decide whether a movement feels high morale or crushing despair. It determines whether a resistance force can fight on a sustained basis or whether a burst of early enthusiasm is crushed by the hardships of prolonged political conflict.

Logistics

In everyday conversation, people use “logistics” to mean, vaguely, any little details. But its more formal meaning is specific. Logistics involves moving people and stuff and providing people with the supplies, equipment, and services they need. Sometimes it’s divided into “movement, materiel, and maintenance.”

The US Department of Defense uses the term “logistics” to mean: “Planning and executing the movement and support of forces. It includes those aspects of military operations that deal with: a. design and development, acquisition, storage, movement, distribution, maintenance, evacuation, and disposition of materiel; b. movement, evacuation, and hospitalization of personnel; c. acquisition or construction, maintenance, operation, and disposition of facilities; and d. acquisition or furnishing of services.”

Military writer P. D. Foxton observed that logistics are often overlooked during quiet times: “They emerge during war because war is very much fact. They disappear in peace, because in peace, war is mostly theory.”[208] He might well have been writing about resistance groups or about any serious activist campaign. In my experience and many, if not most, of the cases I have researched, inadequate logistics are the major hurdle to campaign escalation. People in the Occupy movement quickly discovered the logistical challenges of setting up smoothly running encampments for more than a few days. Any major action brings logistical challenges.

When I started to research this subject, I found surprisingly few resources about logistics for resistance movements. There were a handful of search hits and some discussion in military manuals, but shockingly little compared to writings on tactics, strategy, and other more dramatic subjects. One reason became clear to me when I came across this paragraph in a book about the 1950s Mau Mau revolt in Kenya. Muthoni Likimani writes:

> Mau Mau was a *top secret* movement of people who went to war with nothing—no guns, no spears . . . nothing but determination to get freedom and their land. What upsets me is that of all the books written about the movement, as much as women were involved, no one has ever written about the extent of their involvement. To me, women were unsung warriors. They were the fighters that no one talks about. They went to the forest with other men. They were seeing that the people in the forest were fed, that the sick were taken care of. Women raised money, stole guns, stole medicine, transported all kinds of goods into the forest, they were even shooting.[209]

Terisa Turner adds: “Women . . . provided intelligence, runners, food, refuge, medical supplies and care” while others carried messages and provided arms and safe houses.[210] Too many historians of too many

resistance movements mention women only in asides. They ignore the fact that without (mostly unmentioned) women doing logistical work, the men those historians focus on would be unarmed, hungry, without medical care, unable to find the enemy, and probably naked.

The logistical underpinnings of a resistance movement are too often overlooked as unglamorous "women's work." Logistics may not be spectacular, but they are still essential, and we ignore them at our peril. Consider the words of Iulia, who argues that sexism among Greek anarchists during the 2008 uprisings showed in a tendency to glorify violent or "masculine" activities, while excluding those that are traditionally "feminine." She says: "As for valuing masculine labor over feminine labor, we lack the organization in which the importance of feminine labor becomes obvious. The heroic acts are more important; that's the only narrative we have, and so the feminine labor is not valued. I think that's why we don't have many squats in Greece, because it requires organization."[211]

Of course, there's another reason we may not talk about logistics. Those of us in globally affluent aboveground movements have outsourced our logistical needs such that we may not think of them. If we need fliers for an action, we don't need to set up a mimeograph machine in a hidden room; we can head down to Staples and photocopy them. If we need food, we don't have to smuggle sacks of rice through underground tunnels; we go to the grocery store. If we need to visit distant comrades for a meeting, we don't walk for weeks along hidden jungle paths; we get on the bus or drive.

These things cost money, and so for many movements meeting logistical needs is ultimately about fundraising. This is crucial, but comes with its own set of risks and benefits. And so fundraising is what I'll start with.

THE NONPROFIT INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

I’m looking at an old photo of renowned organizer Saul Alinsky sitting in his office. On the blackboard behind him are the words: “Low Overhead=High Independence.”

Organizations need money, and large, professionalized organizations need a lot of it. Every source of money comes with its own challenges. Grassroots fundraising is hard, but large donations from private sources often have strings attached. Which is the focus of an excellent anthology, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex* from INCITE: Women of Color Against Violence.

In her contribution to that anthology, Andrea Smith tells how, at the dawn of the twentieth century, the “multimillionaire robber barons” of the United States (like the Rockefellers and Carnegies) made vast fortunes by exploiting “natural resources” and human beings. To protect their earnings they turned, ironically, to philanthropy. By transferring some of their wealth to charitable foundations, they could protect their wealth from taxation.

But faced with a growing labour movement, and flourishing political radicalism in general, the robber barons found a second purpose for their foundations: to undermine radical organizations in favor of pro-capitalist charity. This meant, for example, they might donate to a charity giving handouts to unemployed workers, while simultaneously hiring Pinkertons and strike-breakers to use against the labour radicals.

“The rationale behind this strategy was that while individual workers deserved social relief,” explains Smith, “organized workers in the form of unions were a threat to society.” By choosing who was funded and who wasn’t, these foundations could manipulate or suppress social movements. This would apply to the civil rights movement, too, as Robert L. Allen wrote in his 1969 book *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*. He explains:

> The simple but unfortunate fact is that the militants are usually less well organized than the Urban League, the NAACP, [the Southern Christian Leadership Conference], preachers, teachers, and social workers who are invited to participate in the [struggle for Black liberation]. Consequently, it is relatively easy for representatives of the privileged Black bourgeoisie to take control of organizations ostensibly dedicated to militant reform, to enabling Black people to assume control over their own lives. If this process of takeover goes unchecked, the united front is transformed into an instrumentality serving the interests of the Black middle class alone. The needs of the popular Black masses go by the board, and a new oppressive elite assumes power.[212]

Allen cites particular grants, fellowships, and leadership programs that were designed to recruit specific organizers and co-opt key organizations.[213] He points to the Congress of Racial Equality as a target for co-optation, arguing that it was made vulnerable by high expenditures and overhead. Its position in the middle—"militant rhetoric but ambiguous and reformist definition of Black power . . . appealed to Foundation officials who were seeking just those qualities in a Black organization which hopefully could tame the ghettos. From the Foundation's point of view, old-style moderate leaders no longer exercised any real control, while genuine Black radicals were too dangerous."[214]

As always, those in power tried to split movements into manageable parts. Some of those parts were managed with the carrot through financial incentives, fellowships, and promises of political connections. Other parts of the movement and other people—people like Fred Hampton or Anna Mae Aquash—could not be co-opted. So they were managed with the stick, and with the police pistol, and with the old standbys of poverty and economic exploitation.[215]

The “charitable” foundations of the capitalist elite used a similar approach overseas, Christine E. Ahn and Mark Dowie argue. The Rockefeller Foundation was a major backer of that mass social and agricultural re-engineering known as the Green Revolution. Afraid that hunger in the “third world” would provoke communist revolutions, the Rockefellers funded massive projects to intensify and industrialize agriculture around the world.[216] As a means of reducing hunger it was a dramatic failure; about one million people globally were hungry at the start of the Green Revolution, a number that ballooned to 800 million by the time it was over.[217] (An unsurprising consequence of replacing countless stable and locally adapted food systems with monocultures.) It was, however, very successful at making people dependent on industrial capitalist economies.[218]

The system of foundation funding has influenced and railroaded social movements for a century. *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* is full of stories of funders—subtly or not-so-subtly—encouraging organizers to take on less radical, less controversial political stances in exchange for funding. This exacerbates a split between different movement wings. On one hand are the mostly liberal nonprofits, well-organized and professionalized, with relatively large budgets for communications and outreach, and with mostly reform-oriented goals. On the other hand are the grassroots activists and the radical groups, loosely organized and poorly funded, working and organizing on what funds they can scrape together. Plenty of radical people work in nonprofits, of course, but often can’t say what they truly believe out of fear of losing their funding.

This system is dangerous in part because it can function to draw the most promising or capable organizers away from their own communities and funnel them off into a better-paying—and less threatening—career path. This doesn’t just happen in the affluent parts of the world. A friend told me about communities in Mexico where doing really radical action

when young is part of a career trajectory—it's how activists "show their chops" to illustrate that they're worth buying off.[219]

Dylan Rodríguez speaks to this idea directly, arguing that the nonprofit industrial complex (NPIC) "contributes to a mode of organizing that is ultimately unsustainable. To radically change society, we must build mass movements that can topple systems of domination, such as capitalism. However, the NPIC encourages us to think of social justice organizing as a career; that is, you do the work if you can get paid for it. However, a mass movement requires the involvement of millions of people, most of whom cannot get paid. By trying to do grassroots organizing through this careerist model, we are essentially asking a few people to work more than full-time to make up for the work that needs to be done by millions."[220]

They also warn of the hazards of grant funding in general, and how it can hamper cooperation by forcing social justice organizations to compete with one another. The strategic effects are serious as well; instead of deciding what they think is the most important action to take, or what will be the most valuable to their communities, social justice organizations may rewrite their goals to fit what they think will get funded.

So what to do? Should all radical organizations refuse foundation grants? There are many different answers. Strong and diverse social movements have room for different kinds of organizations. Liberal, educational nonprofits have an important role to play in raising awareness, among other things. Christine E. Ahn writes: "I do not argue that social justice organizations should not take foundation grants—in fact, they should, particularly to fund think tanks and other rigorous intellectual engagement with political issues and policy debates. But it is critical that social justice organizations abandon any notion that foundations are *not* established for a donor's private gain."[221]

We cannot expect all groups and organizations to match our own needs for orthodoxy. Well-funded organizations can do important work in social

movements. Grassroots funding is always harder to gather; if big organizations are doing awareness-raising for some issue, then radicals can be freed up to focus on building communities of resistance and on taking action. (Which is what a lot of us would rather be doing, anyway.)

Another answer is that radical groups—resistance movements in general—need to develop their own grassroots sources of funding. This is not necessarily popular, as Stephanie Guilloud and William Cordery explain in their essay "Fundraising Is Not a Dirty Word."

Guilloud and Cordery write: "When you convene organizers, nonprofit staff members and activists together, fundraising is rarely the center of passionate debate. Though an important component of most organizing efforts in the United States, fundraising is usually perceived by activists as our nasty compromise within an evil capitalist structure. As long as we relegate fundraising to a dirty chore better handled by grant writers and development directors than organizers, we miss an opportunity to create stepping-stones toward community-based economies."[222] Community fundraising has benefits beyond the cash, they argue: "Grassroots fundraising is a strategy to maintain a firm connection to our base and to initiate community-based economic structures."[223]

So where do radical movements get money? And how do they get it in a way that ensures the integrity of both their morals and their pocketbooks?

FUNDING RESISTANCE GROUPS

In the recruitment chapter, I wrote about resistance movements as a set of concentric circles (See Figure 10-1). A mass base of sympathizers supports the movement from a distance. Auxiliaries help directly (but occasionally) with organizing, while cadres, leaders, and combatants form the most

dedicated core of the movement. Recruiters aim to move people inward, from distant moral supporters to active members.

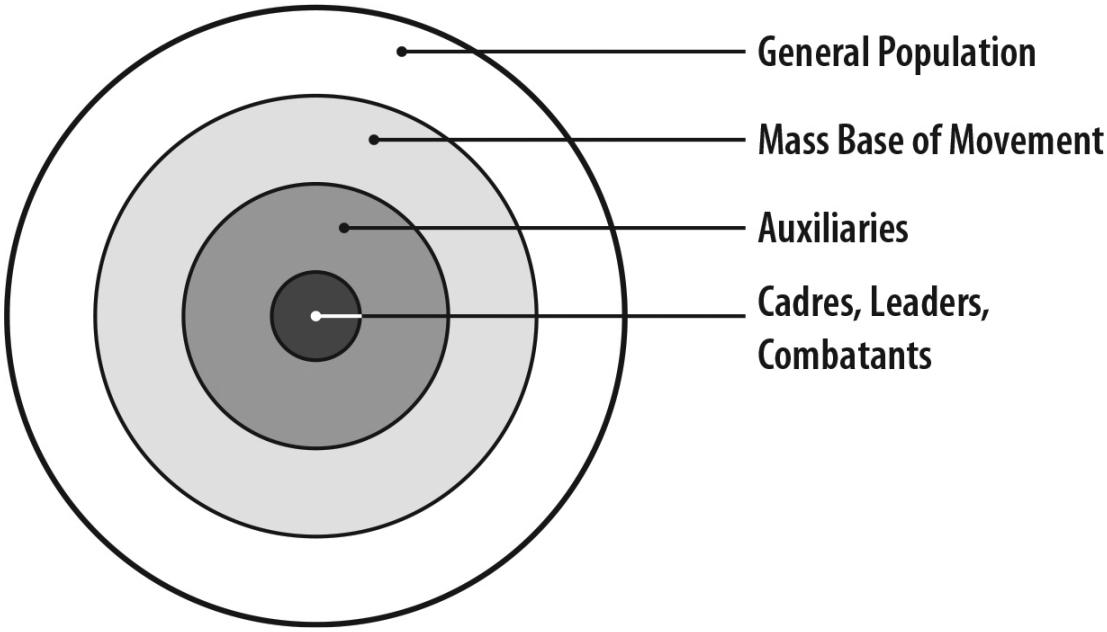


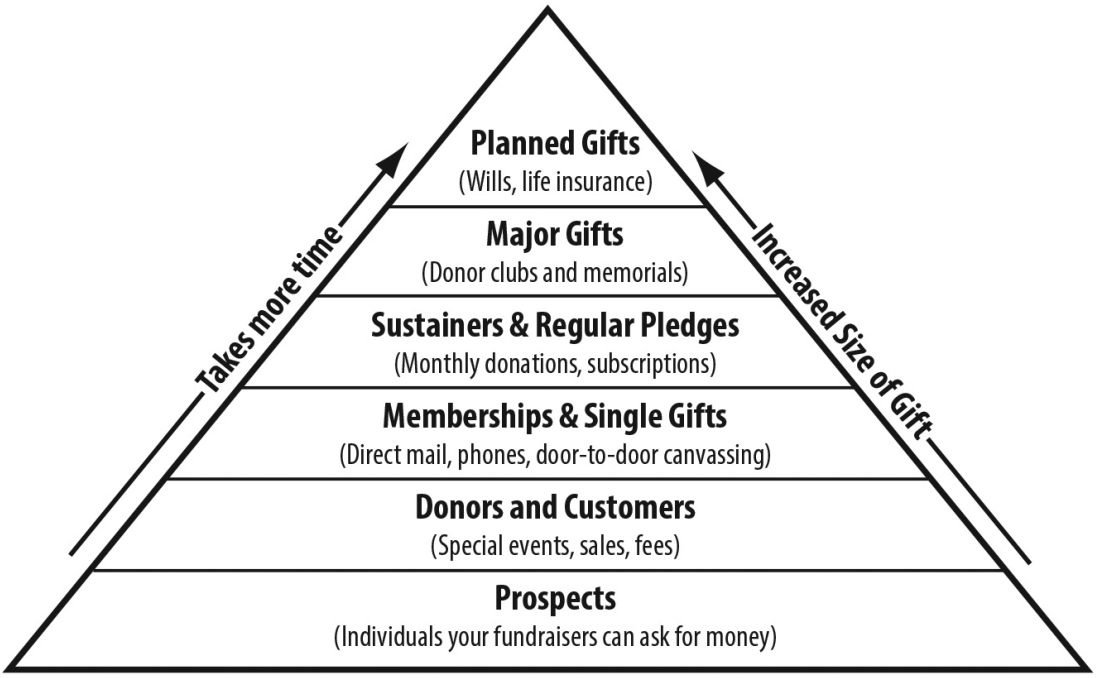
Figure 10-1: Resistance movement parts as concentric circles

Fundraising works the same way. You start with an uninvolved outer group, initiate a relationship with them, and ask them to support your movement. As time goes on, you build that relationship, and encourage people to make larger and more regular contributions.

Joan Flanagan, in her book *Successful Fundraising: A Complete Handbook for Volunteers and Professionals* uses a pyramid to show the kinds of donations individuals make. (See Figure 10-2. I've modified the labels slightly to better match the terminology I'm using here.)

Flanagan explains: "The bottom layer represents the most people. They will give the least amount of money, have the least commitment to the organization, and take the least time to cultivate. The top of the pyramid has the fewest people, who give the most money, are the most committed to the mission of the group, and need the most time to cultivate. There is a direct relationship between time and money: the more money, the more time it

takes to get. So start now."[224] That progress starts at the bottom of the pyramid.



Modified from Joan Flanagan's *Successful Fundraising: A Complete Handbook for Volunteers and Professionals.*

Figure 10-2: Fundraising Pyramid for Individual Gifts

She writes: "The first donations to your organization may come from sales, special events, or fees for service. These are the easiest transactions, because donors get something tangible in return. You are asking for the smallest amounts of money, and this takes the least time."[225] But over time, you encourage people to move up the fundraising pyramid so that a smaller number become bigger donors. "Build the base of small gifts first. Eighty to 90 percent of planned gifts and major gifts come from people who have been members or annual donors for three to five years."[226]

Building that base is important and—as much as radicals dislike asking for money—fundraising has a lot in common with community outreach. Talking to strangers or neighbors about radical issues is not necessarily easy, but it is important, and it's a capacity that radicals need to develop.

To learn more about fundraising for radicals, I sat down with Harry Pilfold. Harry is a professional fundraiser who works with environment NGOs to develop and coordinate door-to-door fundraising campaigns. He's also a longtime radical and activist—the perfect person to give advice on fundraising for revolutionaries.

Harry tells me that his first months as a new canvasser were very challenging. But a few difficult months in, something changed. He had a breakthrough. Now he says: "It's the best job of my life." Harry is confident, his speech animated. He's full of anecdotes; a skilled fundraiser, ready to make a good first impression and build rapport. Which is important, because he has spent a lot of his time knocking on strangers' doors.

We activists—and radicals in particular—often work in a bubble, interacting mostly with people with similar politics. That's a promising social pool for fundraising in that we may have strong connections and know people who share our commitment to a cause. But it's usually a very small pool, and one that we must consider reaching beyond to fund effective organizations. And that means asking for funds from people who aren't 100 percent ideological matches.

And that's okay. The reasons that people give money, Harry explains, are as much emotional as they are intellectual. Success requires solid ideas as part of an emotionally moving pitch. Effective fundraisers *believe* in the importance of their work.

Harry tells me about running into one canvasser who was not at all familiar with environmental issues, and had been telling people an organization would help save "the whales of the Great Lakes." Which, obviously, don't exist, and almost everyone knows it. But that canvasser was successful because of her confidence, because she really believed in raising money for environmental causes.

There are a few key reasons that people give money, Harry tells me:

1) *Confidence.* “Everything about canvassing is about confidence, and it’s about expectation. When you start out as a canvasser—I guess for me—I had the belief that people will give you money because they feel sorry for you. Or people will give you money because they agree with what you are fundraising for. I used to focus a lot on explaining things to people, on appealing to their sense of good. What I learned later is that if you are confident, people want to be on the winning team and people want to support you. Having a positive attitude is much more important.”
2) *They like you.* Maybe you’re charming, or funny, or even earnest. “People give you money because they like you, not because they like the issues. They give you money because you are strong and confident. If they think you are weak they are not sympathetic, they kick you when you’re down. And the truth is if you try to appeal to people’s sense of decency you’re not going to get anywhere.” Personal stories help people connect to the person asking for money. “So you try and present so that they can see themselves in you. Or that they can see their kids in you. And when they recognize that connection they’ll give to you regardless of the issue.”
3) *They feel guilty.* “People give out of guilt. . . . they know they should be doing something about climate change but they don’t. They crank their heat up to ninety degrees in the wintertime, they drive a fucking SUV, and they can feel better for giving you money.”
4) *Fear for the future.* “People give out of fear. You present to someone the issue of toxic chemicals, and they’re afraid for their kids or their future . . . and I think with good reason.”

5) *They want to do what their neighbors are doing.* Harry tells me a story about a couple he visited who asked to see the receipt book, and then went to another room and took a long time to write a check. When the couple got back, they handed over a check with an oddly precise amount. That amount turned out to be an exact average of what their neighbors had already donated.

So how do you get good at making that initial connection, at asking people for money?

Learn to approach people, and practice. How you approach people will determine your success, especially with strangers or people outside your immediate political community.

When someone answers the door, Harry introduces himself and gets right into his pitch. Don't ask questions, he advises, not even "How are you?" or "Have you heard of our group?" Questions are an invitation to say "no."

Appear confident, friendly, and enthusiastic. Make eye contact and smile. *Ms. Magazine* warns against "begging, apologizing, or demanding" when asking for money. They write: "Funders need to be convinced that you believe in the project, and that their participation would not be charity or an obligation, but, yes, a privilege."[227]

Fundraiser Dorie Wilsnack advises you to remember "that people who contribute to your work do so because *you* are doing them a favor, not vice versa. You are out there holding the rallies and press conferences and distributing the literature for something that they deeply believe in but don't have the time or inclination to work on actively."[228]

Credibility and appearance are important in making a first impression. Having a bank account, the ability to accept checks, and numbered receipts are all helpful. (People donate larger amounts if you can take checks or

credit cards, even if they are donating with cash, because you seem more credible.) Credibility also means that your appearance, your approach, and your materials should match.[229]

Talk about the good work your organization does, but don't get diverted into details of the issue unless people are specifically curious (or want to test you). Having a pamphlet or materials to hand them at the *very* end is fine, but if you give someone anything bigger than a postcard it can be a conversation-ender. People will often use that as an excuse to defer action: "Let me read this first." It's better to give literature or a website only to finish the conversation.

At some point, once you've established a connection, you do have to ask for money. (Harry tells me about canvassers who never mention money until the very end, almost as an afterthought.) Name a *specific amount* that you are asking for. Make giving as simple as possible. While some organizations will offer a bracket of donation choices (low, medium and high), whenever you force people to choose among options you introduce an obstacle.[230] Better to ask for the specific amount you need, and let them know that anything they give (higher or lower) is appreciated.

Dorie Wilsnack notes: "The more specific you are about what the money is for, the more likely that people who support your cause will give. If your cause seems vague and not well organized, they will be less likely to contribute. Be clear with people on whether the money is going to support the group, or you, or both."[231]

You do have to practice this to get good at it. Especially for radicals and anti-capitalists, asking for money can be really uncomfortable and counterintuitive. But we still live in a money-based society. Some of us need to learn to ask people for money—and get really good at it—if we want our movements to grow and flourish. As Joan Flanagan writes: "You are not serving your organization by waiting for money to come in and surrender. To guarantee a dependable income, you need to *ask* for money

and ask your volunteers to ask for money."[232] Harry suggests canvassing as often as possible for practice, and that getting a part-time job fundraising for a community nonprofit is a great way to get paid training and experience.[233]

What makes a good canvasser? Not everyone is emotionally suited to being a canvasser, in part because of the need to deal with frequent rejection.

Harry tells me: "I'm not bothered by rejection. Especially rejection by middle-class people. I couldn't give a damn what their opinion is. For me, when they reject me, it just gives more reinforcement to my ideas. . . . For other people that's a real downer, to get rejected. So you can't be a wilting flower and do this."

At the same time, Harry notes, it's hard to tell at the very beginning who will succeed or not. Harry tells me he was shy when he started canvassing, but that he grew and developed as a person because of his work.

Some things will work against you, he says. Being too emotionally transparent is a problem, because if your facial expression shows that you dislike something they say, a person won't donate to you. Being afraid to argue or disagree is also a problem, because some people will like to test or try to provoke you before being willing to donate. But stoicism isn't the answer; effective canvassers must be emotionally perceptive and be able to read body-language and nonverbal cues.

Good canvassers are often nonconformists with the ability to be enthusiastic. Canvassers who are more interested in talking about the issues than the money will—paradoxically—make more money.

Who to ask? You need to research potential donors, just as you would gather any other kind of valuable intelligence. Start with people you know, advises Flanagan. "Ask your fundraising committee to make a list of the names of people they personally can ask for a donation."

In canvassing, Harry suggests, look for some key indicators that the people in a house might be sympathetic to your cause. Political signs during elections can help you pick out people with sympathetic politics, and you can cherry-pick promising houses during election time to return to later. Friendly politicians might be able to suggest promising neighborhoods. You can call a canvass director from another organization and ask for advice or offer a "turf rotation" so that you don't canvass the same area around the same time.

Harry suggests that as you gain experience you'll learn to pick up on some indicators of a promising donor. For environmental causes, he suggests, beware a well-manicured lawn and highly controlled yard. An untamed yard or garden is more promising. Signs of kids, young families, and young people tend to be good. And neighborhoods that are seen as current and happening are promising for environmental donations, including places with hip stores nearby (outdoor stores, yoga studios, even Starbucks).

Other causes are better matched to other demographics, writes Joan Flanagan. "If you want low-income people to respect your organization, ask them to give and to raise funds. Poor people, better than anyone else, know that if you want something, you have to pay for it."[234] And working-class people are proportionally more generous than affluent groups.

Build movements. Canvassing is a great way to build movements. I know a lot of radicals who would be afraid to talk to strangers about political beliefs. But Harry argues that face-to-face outreach is especially important for radical groups. "They try to discredit us in the media or in society by making us look foolish or extreme. Or making us look stupid or lumpen, like we're just knee-jerk violent lunatics. . . . Putting a rational, nice-person face on radical ideas is going to build credibility for the movement, not discredit you as an individual. If we can build that [face-to-face]

relationship, it makes it much harder to slander us in the media because we can counter-spin it."

Flanagan explains: "If you want to raise money and *at the same time* identify the citizens who care about your cause, you have to ask people to give money to your organization because they want what it does. . . . The fastest, easiest, most accurate way to find the people who share your values is to ask them for money."[235] She adds: "Asking for money for your programs identifies the most interested donors, the most committed leaders, and the most desirable issues. Remember, this is building the broad base of givers, some of whom will later make larger gifts and bequests."[236]

As a means of movement-building, fundraising forces us to learn to communicate both what we *have* achieved and what we *want* to achieve. Because we have to talk to strangers in tangible terms about what we are doing, it also helps us to develop our strategy and connect with new people.

Harry explains: "Canvassing is less about changing people's minds than it is about finding like-minded people who already share your general goals. And that's a valid function—and can support other attempts to change minds over the long haul. To win those people over you need to be confident, and show that you have a track record of success. If you have past victories then people can have more faith in your future plans. Once you've established that you are winners, you need to paint an inspiring vision of a future win that you can achieve (with their support)."

Frame radical messages. Radical groups have some special challenges in framing their messages for mass fundraising appeal. Harry advises that radicals have to figure out how their group's issues fit into reasons people give. Being able to appeal to middle-class people with money helps. So does framing issues in a way that puts radicals on the winning team. "[Turn] your issues into stories that are sellable. It sounds like a weird process, but

essentially that's the job of fundraising: make your issues appeal to people who otherwise wouldn't want to support you."

Next, Harry says: "Go out there and talk to people about it. The process of developing those stories can't happen in a meeting and then it's like 'It's done!' You've got to go out and try it on people. Because you never really know what's going to tap into people, or different types of people, until you go and do it. It's the experience of fundraising."

"I think the truth is that a lot of people are afraid to knock on a stranger's door and talk to them about stuff, especially stuff that's socially marginalized." He adds: "The honest truth is I love to talk to people I'm going to piss off. . . . I'd love to go and fundraise for an organization like [radical anti-poverty group] OCAP in a really rich neighborhood. You'd get a lot of slammed doors and piss off a lot of people, but the few people you did connect with would be huge supporters. They'd respect your strength in doing it."

Radical ideas may not have mass popularity right now, but people who share them tend to feel very strongly. Harry explains: "In fundraising you can have an issue that's an inch deep and a mile wide, and a million people will give you five dollars. And you can have an issue which is more radical, it's like a mile deep and an inch wide. It's just a matter of finding the right people."

A radical or militant attitude can be really helpful for fundraising if you frame it properly. To fundraise well you have to come across as a confident person who believes that your group is really making a difference. And that's a lot easier to do with radical groups than wishy-washy liberal organizations, as Harry explains: "I think liberal environmental groups are harmless, or mostly harmless. To be honest, raising awareness about issues (and by their very failure to make any systemic change) really lays the groundwork for more radical organizing."

Radical groups can get a lot of donations by differentiating themselves from liberal groups working on the same issues, by showing themselves to be braver or more effective. To be able to say “we’re the only ones doing” a certain kind of work is very powerful as a fundraising pitch.

The middle class is fickle, Harry tells me, especially on class issues, but for radical environmental issues the middle class is a huge fundraising base. “Everyone knows that turning your lights off during Earth Hour is futile, everyone’s waiting for someone to come along and tell them what to do. Something that might actually work. The mood is angry out there.”

Joan Flanagan argues: “Controversy is usually very good for your fundraising, because it will clarify the issue and emphasize the urgency of the need. When the Seattle conservatives forced the United Way to expel Planned Parenthood, they were doing Planned Parenthood a favor. Leaders from that organization went directly to local individuals and businesses for support. Result: their donor list went from three thousand to seventeen thousand people, and they made up more than the $450,000 lost from the United Way. . . . Any controversy will get your organization’s name out in the public. Most service delivery organizations lose more people from apathy and boredom than from honest differences of opinion. A good fight will help you define who is on your side.”[237]

Even a bad political climate can help radicals fundraise. Harry explains: “Nothing is better for us than right-wing governments. The amount of money you make, the amount of headway you make, the amount of recruiting you do with opponents in power is way better than when your quote ‘allies’ are in power.”

Build relationships and escalate. Grassroots fundraising, as Harry tells me, is about the long game. At first, the goal is to build affinity with people, to build personal relationships and lists of promising donors. In the first year, professional canvassing operations typically lose money. They might

break even in the second year. Only in the third year and afterward do they start to be real sources of money.

The challenge is to keep going when it is tough at the start. “In the first year, if you have an issue that’s unpopular, that’s a very emotionally trying thing. You’re getting rejected a lot.” He adds: “But in a second year, or a third year, when you have a list of people who already gave to you and know that a couple doors down the street there’s someone a lot more sympathetic, who gave you a hundred bucks or five hundred bucks last year. It suddenly makes it a lot easier to do.”

It’s important to keep new supporters engaged and build their relationship with your group over time. Harry: “Send them regular emails. Not too frequent. Don’t send them an email unless there’s content to it because people will ignore it. But send an email when you have something to report. Boast about your victories. . . . Say ‘this never would have happened without us.’ It’s something you can say about almost anything.”

You grow your fundraising base by adding new people every year, and by increasing the amounts that people give each year. Harry actually jokes with supporters that they should donate more because of *moral inflation*: “You gave us fifty bucks last year and you didn’t feel guilty, now you’ve got to give a hundred bucks not to feel guilty!”

Paid professionals or volunteer fundraisers? Professional fundraisers are skilled in the practicalities of their job, and not afraid to ask people for money. Since they’re being paid by what they raise, and since they can work full-time, they can raise a much larger gross than volunteers. The disadvantage is that they might not be as familiar with the people or issues (e.g., the “whales of the Great Lakes”). And you lose part of the revenue to pay their salaries. You’re in trouble if too much money is devoured by the operating costs of the fundraising apparatus.

Volunteer fundraisers may not have as much experience. But you can train them, they're free (aside from the effort to coordinate them), and they may have better connections in their own communities than an outside professional. The fact that they're doing it because they believe in their cause—rather than because they're being paid—might help them convince people to donate.

However, Harry advises that large-scale fundraising isn't as effective on a strictly volunteer basis. "If you want it to be successful then you can't do it on the basis of volunteers. . . . No one's going to canvass in January and February when it's twenty or thirty degrees [F], as a volunteer. No one's going to do it every single day and learn the skills to do it. I'm a good canvasser, and it took me three months to learn it. A volunteer is never going to cross that threshold. You have to do it consistently over a period of time, and really in our society the only way to do that is if you're really, really rich or if you are getting paid."

Funding Sources for Resistance Movements

Resistance groups get funding and support from a wide variety of sources including:

- Small gifts.
- Special events and sales.
- Tithes, dues, sustainers, and subscriptions.
- Grants, foundations, and major gifts.
- Revolution on a shoestring.
- Expropriation & illegal activities.

To get started, figure out how much money you'd like to raise and which sources are best suited to your group. A diversity of sources can make your funding more robust in the face of disruption. Try to make

reasonable estimates of how much you can raise from each activity, to research prospects for fundraising.

Small gifts. Small individual donations are the foundation of grassroots fundraising. Large donations and grants have promise, but can leave groups at the whim of a few powerful individuals. Large numbers of small donations are more work to get, but they can also help you build a real base, a community to which you are accountable.

A personal approach is important when first making contact. Mass mailings and online appeals can be very effective. But, Harry warns, "online fundraising is way overrated." It's popular because it's cheap, and it can be very effective when it is an urgent appeal for a specific issue. But generally, only one in a thousand people will actually respond to a mass online request. It's the face-to-face relationship that makes individual appeals work.

Special events and sales. Big events and benefits like concerts, dances, bake sales or film screenings are important funding sources for some. They can also be a big investment in time and resources, an investment that might not pay off (grassroots groups need to be cautious about the risk of losing money). Big events can also divert your time and resources away from the core work you want to do. But if an event is well suited to your base, and if it works reasonably well, you can repeat it and improve it. Like fundraising in general, it may take multiple tries before it becomes polished enough to be a good moneymaker.

Selling stuff to fundraise on an ongoing basis may reduce the risk of a single big event. The downside of selling things, of course, is that part of your income goes to paying expenses, handling stock, breakage, et cetera. So if someone is participating just because they want to give you money, it's better to ask them for $20 than to sell them something for $20 if only half of that is actual profit.

Fundraising groups can reduce stock handling expenses by selling lowcost items that are mostly symbolic tokens. Veteran organizations give poppies in exchange for a donation, radical groups may give or sell buttons, cards, newspapers, and so on.

During the 1920s the One Big Union (which was instrumental in the Winnipeg General Strike) made much of its money from a weekly lottery.

Tithes, dues, sustainers, and subscriptions. This category is the funding core for stable grassroots organizations. Many of the radical organizations I interviewed for this book relied on a small pool of regular individual donors. Because resistance movements—especially early on—are a minority of the population, they can never bring in the kind of mass fundraising that liberal organizations can. They depend on the "inch wide, mile deep" group of truly committed supporters.

Flanagan suggests: "Membership dues are the ideal form for annual fundraising, because they are the most democratic, dependable, and renewable form of fundraising. . . . For smaller organizations, your current members can sell memberships in person. If your cause has a broader appeal, especially if it is very popular or very controversial, you can hire professional fundraisers to mass-market memberships through direct mail, telemarketing, or a door-to-door canvass."[238]

Besides money, sustainer donations or dues will help you build political power, "an accurate evaluation of your programs and leaders," get people involved, and secure greater loyalty from donors.

Resistance movements often rely on membership dues. The Deacons for Defense had a $10 membership fee to join, followed by monthly dues of $2. Members had to pay their dues in order to vote, which was important because major decisions were made democratically.

Trade unions couldn't exist without dues. The Industrial Workers of the World took dues seriously. Itinerant workers often "rode the rails" to get

around, and the IWW card ensured access to the right train cars. People who *didn't* have a card might actually get kicked off the train.

The tithe is closely related; the word is from Old English meaning tenth: that is, people would give a tenth (or 10 percent) of their income to the church. This wasn't always money; it could have been food or other goods. Resisters can use tithes, too.

Regular donors—such as those who donate on a monthly basis—are often called "sustainers"—Harry advises not to use the term "members" for people who aren't active participants. Most people who give don't want to *be* members—they donate because they *don't* want to do things.

Donors don't have to give support only in money—resistance movements also need support in-kind—supplies, equipment, rooms and spaces, and so on. Supporters can even put people up—"resisters in residence"—to cut their living costs.

Grants, foundations, and major gifts. Depending on the kind of work you do, you may be able to get grants from foundations or institutions. Grants can be well worth the effort, especially if they (a) are easy to get or (b) will let you take on projects you couldn't tackle otherwise. Grants rarely offer support for core staff or organizations.

Private donors may be willing to give large gifts—this usually happens after a long period of relationship building and visits. People have to be encouraged, over time, to move upward on the fundraising pyramid.

There are some unusual grants out there, however, from radical funders. And there are unconventional sources of funding from institutions; I spoke to people at one environmental nonprofit who got early funding from "bounties" paid for identifying small oil leaks into waterways. By surveying the nearby harbor for leaks they advanced their mission and helped fund themselves.

Revolution on a shoestring. "A penny saved is a penny earned," the saying goes. Up to a point, efforts to reduce your overhead expenses can be just as rewarding as raising new money. Often what revolutionaries need most of all isn't money—it's time. To become a radical you need enough time to process and analyze your own experiences. To take action, you need even more time.

Most of the people I interviewed worked from campaign to campaign, rather than as part of formally organized and paying resistance groups. As such, they each had their own mix of strategies to spend as much time as possible doing work they thought important.

These included:

- Cooperative or communal living,
- minimizing unnecessary expenses and debt by living simply (or living in the woods, subsistence gardening, gathering, hunting, etc.),
- working relatively well-paying jobs part time or intermittently,
- working institutional or NGO jobs which allowed them to do some of their own work "on the clock,"
- on-the-job organizing or resistance (via labour unions, etc.),
- family or friend support, and
- fees from writing, teaching, or speaking about radical topics.

For insurgents in the Global South, revolution on a shoestring may look even more extreme. Arundhati Roy describes a Naxalite revolutionary camp in India like so: "I looked around at the camp before we left. There are no signs that almost a hundred people had camped here, except for some ash where the fires had been. I cannot believe this army. As far as consumption goes, it's more Gandhian than any Gandhian, and has a lighter carbon footprint than any climate change evangelist. But for now, it even has a Gandhian approach to sabotage; before a police vehicle is burnt for example, it is stripped down and every part is cannibalized. The steering wheel is straightened out and made into a [rifle] barrel, the rexine

upholstery stripped and used for ammunition pouches, the battery for solar charging."[239]

Expropriation & illegal activities. The George Jackson Brigade wrote: "There can be no revolution without money—for weapons, explosives, survival, organizing, printing, etc. The people are poor. We will make the ruling class pay for its own destruction by expropriating our funds from them and their banks."[240]

Since resistance groups already reject existing legal authority, there is a certain logic to expropriation as a source of funds. (Robin Hood certainly thought so.) The benefit for underground revolutionary groups is that they already have the security infrastructure needed to break the law.

That may be low-risk activity like setting up a squat, shoplifting, or taking advantage of bankruptcy loopholes. Movements in the past have printed counterfeit money.

Some groups have escalated to robbing banks or Brink's trucks (risky tactics used by members of the George Jackson Brigade and the Black Liberation Army, among many others). Others (like Direct Action) steal cars or property. A few resistance organizations have gotten involved in other illegal activities like the drug trade.

But that road involves many risks and dangers. Some members of the Black Panther Party started to extort business owners and skim the drug trade late in the life of the organization, but it's hard for a movement to keep its moral standing once involved in such things. (Recruiting the people who *really wanted* to do those things also caused a lot of problems for the BPP.) Minor crime like shoplifting is a very bad idea for people who are underground or trying to keep a low profile. Aboveground groups should be careful about breaking the law if it will make those in power better able to demonize them as criminals.

Sometimes anti-poverty or anti-capitalist groups will use public expropriation as a form of action *and* a form of logistical support. The Landless Workers' Movement in Brazil seizes tracts of land owned by wealthy landowners and builds subsistence communities for the poor. The Ontario Coalition Against Poverty has used a related tactic; after a social assistance food subsidy was abolished, people went in groups to the supermarket, filled their carts, and then handed in a "voucher" to the cashier as they passed through with the food they wouldn't otherwise have been able to pay for.

In times of unrest this may be commonplace. In Greece after the economic upheavals of recent years, some anarchists started liberating and redistributing food to people who needed it. Nikos, an anarchist from Athens, explained how teams of thirty masked anarchists would run into major supermarkets and fill shopping carts with food. "Sometimes people would calm the workers, saying that it was an expropriation and that all the food would be distributed for free, we were against property but we didn't want to hurt anybody. And we always made sure to get out of there very quickly." Then they would redistribute the food in open-air markets. Soon it became a regular routine that hungry people would look forward to. "It was a nice feeling, to include all these people in our illegality. Also they learned not to be afraid of the *koukoulofori* [masked activists]. The people who were masked up, dressed in black, and doing outrageous things were on their side. That was very important."[241]

THE BLOCKADE OF THE *THORSCAPE*

It's the night of August 26, 1986. It's dark and raining heavily in Montreal. A huge oceangoing freighter is arriving from apartheid South Africa. The ship carries a million kilograms of yellowcake—refined uranium ore—which was mined in Namibia under South African occupation. The ore is to

be processed in Canada and then shipped to the United States and Japan, despite a UN decree that no country should buy minerals extracted from Namibia.[242]

A loose coalition of anti-war and anti-apartheid groups has organized to stop the ship from unloading the uranium. Activists have tried to block land access to the dock in the past, but police broke their lines. Tonight, the goal is to stop the ship from ever reaching dock. Organizers in Montreal have a new tactic: they plan to surround the freighter with a flotilla of tiny motorboats, to force the ship away from the dock by putting their own bodies on the line. They've sent a call for action for activists to join them.

Among those who respond are Pamela Cross and Peter Dundas, Ontario-based activists who've come in part to build solidarity with Quebec activists. Pamela and Peter bring with them a borrowed aluminum boat.

When they meet other participants in a Montreal apartment, it becomes immediately clear to them that there are some problems. Although the group has rented a number of boats, no one else in the group has boating experience. When they ask for a map of the action site, the organizers—seemingly confused about why one would need a map at all—give them one drawn on a napkin. Some participants speak only English, others speak only French. A group of lesbian separatists wants to make sure that they have no men in their boat, and also that they are not adjacent to men in other boats once the blockade begins. It's decided that the lesbian separatist boat will go ahead of Pamela and Peter's boat—so as a compromise, Peter will sit at the back and Pamela in the front.

The organizers have spotters stationed along the St. Lawrence River to track the progress of the freighter. But when it is time to move from the apartment to launch sites, there is another glitch: the organizers do not have enough cars. Pamela and Peter cram a few extra people into their van. Police follow them all the way to the launch site. When they arrive it is still cold and pouring rain. Pamela and Peter seem to be the only ones who

brought rain gear, so they buy garbage bags at a corner store to make improvised ponchos.

By the time they actually launch the boats it is two o'clock in the morning. Large waves are rolling through Montreal's harbor. As Pamela and Peter pull out toward the freighter, none of the other boats in their flotilla are anywhere to be seen. The freighter, escorted by ten police launches with bright searchlights, is absolutely huge. Even in the distance it looms over their tiny boat. They get close enough that they can stare up at it, as one would stare up at a skyscraper from a sidewalk. If they get too close, they will be swamped.

It is apparent that the flotilla isn't going to show up. So Pamela and Peter are ready to return to shore. But there's another problem. Their napkin map has disintegrated. It's pitch black. Police are everywhere on the shore of the port and to dock there would mean immediate arrest.

Peter and Pamela stay out in the harbor for five hours, evading police launches and looking for a place to dock. Eventually they pull up at a country club dock and find a pay phone to call the support line. The organizers, for some reason, have put the least experienced person on the support line. The woman who answers is not reassuring. "I don't know what to do! I don't know where anyone is! I'm freaking out!"

They manage to find their way back to their original launch location. The boat with the lesbian separatists is floating nearby, becalmed. The rental boats, it turns out, did not come with gas, and so their boat got only a short distance before running out. A debate ensues among the lesbian separatists about whether Peter would be allowed to tow them back to shore. After some discussion, they throw him a towrope.

They land their boat and track down the rest of the group. Eventually they find them, warm, dry, and watching TV in some basement. Pam and Peter are dripping wet. "What the fuck!" exclaims Peter.

“Oh, we never actually got out on the water,” someone explains. “You actually went out there?”

“Yes!” replies Pamela. “We came out here to be part of *your* action!”

Everyone has their own story about why they didn’t launch their boat. They couldn’t get the motor started. The police stopped them. It was raining too much. One participant was arrested because of an unpaid fine. Logistically, the action was an absolute disaster. As one organizer wrote after the fact, “Everything that potentially could go wrong during the action did.”

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Though the attempt at a flotilla was a failure and logistical nightmare, organizers targeting the uranium imports were persistent. After the ship was docked, protesters chained themselves to fences. There was widespread media coverage. A few months later, the shipping line that owned the *Thorscape* announced that it was refusing to carry any more uranium because of the public outcry. So with persistence they achieved a small victory, despite the logistical disarray.

LOGISTICS FOR REVOLUTIONARIES

Enthusiastic militants who focus on conflict sometimes overlook the support needed to sustain that conflict. Even actions like the attempted blockade of the *Thorscape*—a small action compared to larger campaigns—require a lot of logistical support. Effective campaigns and organizations need a strong support base. If a group *fails* to develop enough logistical capacity, their actions are limited to the most basic, the small-scale, and the intermittent.

Logistics are important—really important—for any group that wants to move from dissidence to resistance. Military writers like General Antoine-Henri Jomini ranked logistics on par with strategy and tactics. When the African National Congress was banned, they created five departments as part of their underground organization; three of them dedicated specifically to logistics (and one to intelligence).

Logistics are very different for conventional militaries compared with resistance organizations. As in the example of Vietnam at the beginning of this chapter, conventional militaries have an enormous and expensive supply train stretching great distances, from the safe "rear area" to the front. One US admiral wrote of it as "a continuous bridge or chain of interdependent activities linking combat forces with their roots in the national economy."[243]

This also makes conventional militaries vulnerable. As Stan Goff wrote: "U.S. forces, even the hardest of the hard core, cannot long sustain operations abroad without a huge logistical tail. At bottom, they are products of a pampered and pasteurized society, and they are very fragile. You can put all the muscles you want on a U.S. soldier, and a local *E. coli* will bring him crashing down like a tall tree."[244]

Indeed, any industrial economy is full of rich targets for logistical disruption. For the resister, logistics are both a necessity and a weapon. Road and rail blockades work for that reason.

Effective resistance movements, in contrast to militaries, are localized. They are rooted in the communities that support them. Their supply chains are short and simple. (The US Field Manual on Guerrilla Warfare notes that the logistical requirements of a guerrilla force "are rudimentary and simple when compared to a conventional force of similar size.") Rarely do they have a safe "rear area," because they are under occupation and outgunned.

This is especially true for armed organizations. Guerrilla logistics do not and cannot consist of large warehouses, transport truck convoys, or

intercontinental cargo airplanes. Instead, logistics mirror the structure of an asymmetric warfare organization. Storage and distribution are clandestine, decentralized, and highly mobile. Instead of warehouses, guerrillas have concealed caches. Instead of convoys, supply packages are moved secretly through a variety of creative means.

What are the logistical requirements of a resistance movement?[245] They include:

- *Necessities of life for active members:* food, clothing, shelter and housing, and personal needs.
- *Equipment and supplies for conflict.* This is a very broad category depending on the kind of struggle. For nonviolent direct actions this could include bullhorns, banners, equipment for lockdowns, and so on. For guerrillas it would include arms, ammunition, explosives, and the like. Any group doing coordinated direct action could also need radios, tents, etc.
- *Maintenance and storage of equipment and supplies.* (Including repair, caches, etc.)
- *Transportation to move people and supplies.*
- *Facilities.* (E.g., training and meeting spaces, kitchen spaces, restrooms and latrines, etc.)
- *Medical support and first aid.* (Including mental health)
- *Family and social support.* (Including child care, support for the families of resisters taken away by action, etc.)
- *Prisoner and legal support.* (Including legal observers, lawyers, etc.)
- *Other important services.* (Including communications channels, battery charging, photocopying / printing, etc.)

Clearly logistics is a very expansive category, which is why most of the people in most resistance movements spend most of their time working on it. Remember that only a small percentage of the people in any movement are actually on the front lines of the conflict.

The attempted blockade of the *Thorscape* failed in part because it lacked logistical support in most of these areas. Appropriate clothing (like rain gear) was not available. The equipment needed for the action (such as boats with gas) was not available. There wasn’t enough transportation to get

people to the boats. The person on the support line didn't know what was going on. And so on. Frankly, it was fortunate that no one got hypothermia or drowned.

Making sure you have the right equipment, supplies, and support is an important part of *action planning* (which I'll talk about in the next chapter). If you are always scrambling to deal with basic logistics for every action, your group needs to build more logistical capacity. This is a common problem for militants, and was a challenge for the George Jackson Brigade. "A brigade has an intelligence unit, a supply unit and a combat unit," explained Ed Mead. "All we had was a combat unit."[246]

The George Jackson Brigade learned this the hard way (as they explained in a 1977 open letter). Not long after one in a series of bank robberies, brigade member Rita Brown was out walking the group's dog. Unfortunately, she had a distinctive hairstyle which the FBI knew about; she was spotted and arrested. The rest of the brigade heard about it on the police scanner, and scrambled to respond. Should they evacuate? Where was Rita Brown being held, and could she be rescued? The police scanner told them little.

Preparing to abandon their safe house, they burned some of their personal effects, and loaded the most valuable equipment (like weapons and ammunition) into a vehicle. But it was so heavy that the car could barely drive a block; they had to turn around, get another vehicle, and hastily redistribute their salvaged supplies. They left and unloaded at a safe place. Then they decided to try to retrieve another load of materiel from their base. But by the time they drove back to their old neighborhood, they could see FBI cars converging to raid their house. They lost almost everything.

The FBI found their house. But not because of Rita Brown, who stayed silent. Rather, it was because of the dog, also in police custody. The brigade had always been careful to remove the dog's license tag when they left the house with him. But they had never thought to remove the dog's *rabies* tag,

a logistical oversight that allowed the police to quickly locate their house. “This mistake cost us our base,” they wrote.

They analyzed their mistakes in detail in their open letter, adding: “We overestimated the security of our house and failed to develop clear emergency plans that would have allowed us to evacuate the most valuable equipment, tools, clothes and supplies first. This mistake cost us 90% of our supplies and equipment. We seem to pay dearly for small mistakes in this work. Overall, we made the mistake of too much doing with too little thinking and discussion.”

In the two months before the raid, the small brigade had carried out two bank robberies, four or five bombings, published lengthy political statements, prepared for several other major actions, and did other maintenance work on their vehicles and equipment. When they worked, “the tasks themselves were identified and defined spontaneously, as they came up, with very little advance planning.”[247]

They went over these shortcomings in detail and came up with concrete responses: to have clearly defined areas of responsibility for work, and commitments to action that matched their number of people. They also set aside a day each week for planning and discussion, resolved to make a practical evacuation plan and to practice it.[248]

■ ■ ■

Part of the reason militants sometimes lack logistical support is that combatants may look down on social justice workers who provide services or do general community organizing. It is often the more moderate, stable organizations that have a logistical base: groups with offices and training space, meal providers and community kitchens, radical lawyers. These people can provide much of the logistical advice or support combatants need. But they can’t provide it if militants fail to build relationships with

those moderates, or if militants have a more-radical-than-thou attitude that impedes cooperation.

Providing community services has gone hand in hand with revolutionary organizing for a very long time. Look at what the Black Panther Party did with their community programs. Or consider the work of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua during the struggle to overthrow the dictator Somoza.

Logistical Planning

If you want to ensure that your movement has the logistical support needed to fight the long fight, you need to plan ahead. The US Guerrilla Warfare Manual suggests four steps for resistance logisticians. First, *determine requirements*. What amount of supplies do you need, what kind of logistical capacity is required? Like intelligence, logistics goes hand in hand with strategy and action planning. The people managing logistics need to know what they may be expected to provide. And the people working on action planning need to know whether the logistics they want will actually be available. This may simply mean budgeting.

The second step is to *stockpile* in advance of conflict. Resistance groups accumulate the supplies they need to sustain operations and to provide some buffer in case of unexpected events. Stockpiling could also mean building up a “war chest” of funds before a major campaign.

A third step is *prepackaging*; supplies are not simply stored on pallets in a warehouse, but are packaged from the get-go in a way that will make them useful and portable to those working in the field. So, flashlights packaged with extra batteries, boxes of medical supplies broken out into first aid kits, and so on.

And lastly, *pre-emergency caches* are prepared and put in place before operations or the outbreak of conflict. The emphasis there is on guerrilla conflict, but it still makes sense for supplies to be put near where they will be needed, and to avoid putting all of the supplies in one place where they can be captured or destroyed at once. (During large protests, police routinely raid activist headquarters and hangouts to disrupt organization and seize equipment.)

In his book *For Want of a Nail: The Impact on War of Logistics and Communications*, Kenneth Macksey identifies six key logistical principles: foresight, economy, flexibility, simplicity, co-operation, and self-sufficiency.[249]

Foresight: resistance groups plan in advance and anticipate what they might need to avoid scrambling or scarcity. **Economy:** groups avoid using excessive resources; they try to minimize their consumption. **Flexibility:** resistance groups shouldn't be too picky about their supplies; they substitute as needed to do their job (so, armed resistance groups use whatever weapons they can scrounge, rather than insisting on getting ammunition for their preferred weapon). **Simplicity:** groups rely on a basic, functional supply system rather than an elaborate and expensive one. **Co-operation:** groups share their logistical systems and resources where possible, rather than building unnecessarily redundant systems. **Self-sufficiency:** groups provide for themselves or get supplies locally whenever possible, rather than relying on outside support or long supply chains.

Locally rooted resistance groups with good planning and organization are well-positioned to implement these principles.

Macksey's logistical principles remind me of an old Depression-era saying: "Use it up, wear it out, make do, or do without."

Lea Guido was the secretary general of the revolutionary women's association AMPRONAC during the Sandinista struggle, and minister of social welfare in the reconstruction government that followed.[250] She explained to author Margaret Randall how the women's association expanded its mission after open insurrection began in September of 1978: "We felt the situation had changed qualitatively and it was no longer a priority to organize only women. The immediate task was to mobilize everyone against Somoza. We began organizing civil defense committees, which later, after the war ended, became the Sandinist Defence Committees. We provided the neighborhoods with wood block mimeos, organized first-aid courses and supply depots for basic foodstuffs."[251]

She adds: "We set up clinics . . . houses where medical attention could be meted out during the war. We gave intensive first-aid courses in semi-underground conditions. We promoted massive inoculation programs, knowing we'd have thousands of wounded. We set up a number of neighborhood groceries which were covers for storehouses of basic foodstuffs: rice, beans, etc."[252]

This kind of logistical capacity is not built up overnight. In fact, it is very difficult to establish even for people who are quite good at it. The Sadinistas—with their hands-on constituency of working-class people, small farmers, and so on—proved adaptable and capable in building that kind of capacity.

It's easy to forget that effective resistance movements through most of history have been based on simple technology and community-scale economics.[253] The French Maquis had no supermarkets, the Cheyenne Dog Soldiers no FedEx, the Irish Republican Brotherhood no electricity, and far more resistance movements have relied on movement by foot, mule, or bicycle than by automobile or plane. So it was for most of history and (provided that humans survive the next century) in the future resistance

groups may find themselves operating under conditions rather more like those of historical groups.

In order to be successful in a time of economic and industrial collapse, aboveground resistance movements also need to help develop localized ways of meeting basic human needs—food, water, shelter, and so on.[254]

The PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde are a good example of this. Remember that a young Amílcar Cabral became a revolutionary (and an agronomist) because he saw his own people starve. The destruction of fragile soils on densely populated Cape Verde was a direct result of colonial exploitation.

Because people were so hungry and so poor on the islands of Cape Verde, there was little logistical capacity to support fighters; the armed guerrilla struggle took place mostly on mainland Guinea-Bissau. The PAIGC sought both to build up a revolutionary logistical system and to destroy logistical support for the colonizers. Patrick Chabal explains that Amílcar Cabral "envisioned the economy as a central aspect of the struggle for national liberation and he realized that it could be used as a weapon. Accordingly, it was PAIGC policy to systematically destroy, sabotage or in any way possible dismantle the colonial economy." For growers that meant refusing to cultivate cash crops for export.[255]

The PAIGC set up a system of "people's stores" which served as barter stations for basic goods. They offered goods at a lower price than the colonial stores. The PAIGC also abolished taxes in the liberated zone (something that they knew they wouldn't be able to sustain under independence). The Portuguese responded by selling goods at less than cost, their own attempt at economic warfare.[256]

The PAIGC also put in place mobile hospitals and clinics.[257] And along with the democratic revolutionary councils, village courts were set up, mostly to deal with less serious transgressions. They used traditional

systems of reconciliation and restitution, explained Patrick Chabal: “The courts usually sought rehabilitation rather than punishment.”[258]

Agriculture was, of course, a centerpiece of PAIGC strategy. Recall that PAIGC militants worked the fields when they were not fighting. The 1965 revolutionary party guidelines included seven goals for agriculture:

- “to increase the size of cultivated areas and to raise productivity
- to halt the cultivation of colonial export crops (especially groundnuts)
- to increase and to diversify food cultivation: rice, maize, potatoes, manioc, beans, vegetables, bananas, cashew nuts, oranges and other fruits
- to pay particular attention to the care of cattle and poultry
- to employ the armed forces for cultivation and harvesting whenever possible
- to harvest rapidly and disperse food depots in order to avoid the destruction of food supplies by the Portuguese
- to create and develop collective farms and cooperatives for the production of certain crops (pineapples, bananas and other fruits)”[259]

Not all of this happened quickly, but yields did increase. At the same time, revolutionary fighters adapted their own logistical systems to suit the kind of war they fought. At first, the PAIGC used large, semi-permanent bases. These were quickly located and destroyed by superior Portuguese firepower, so they increasingly shifted to mobile, more self-sufficient guerrilla units.

The PAIGC is far from the only resistance group that had to reorganize for logistical reasons.

In the mid-twentieth century, the Greek Democratic Army (GDA) fought against both the Nazi occupation of Greece and the right-wing regime that followed. For most of the war they used asymmetric guerrilla tactics, but eventually switched to conventional army organization and tactics.

It was a disaster. In *The Withered Vine: Logistics and the Communist Insurgency in Greece*, Charles R. Shrader notes that "[l]arger, less mobile guerrilla formations are more vulnerable to enemy action, as are their training camps, supply dumps, hospitals, and other semifixed facilities as well as their lines of communication. At the same time, they become less able to sustain the spontaneous, incessant, and ubiquitous pinpricks that do so much to sap the strength and morale of the enemy. For a conventional army these handicaps are multiplied many times. . . . The attempt to create a conventional army imposed upon the GDA requirements for both combat and logistical personnel that it could not meet."[260] The GDA was defeated, primarily because of inadequate logistics.[261]

Vietnamese resistance movements, on the other hand, have built incredibly effective logistical support systems again and again. I wrote about the 1960s-era Tunnels of Cu Chi at the start of the chapter, but revolutionary Vietnamese logistics go back much earlier than that.

When the French colony of Vietnam was invaded by Japan during World War II, Vietnamese resisters founded the Viet Minh national liberation movement. They cobbled together arms and equipment from a variety of friendly and unfriendly sources; when the Japanese were defeated at the end of World War II, the Việt Minh captured huge stockpiles of arms to use against the French.[262]

The Việt Minh mobilized or engaged every civilian supporter, regardless of their particular skills. People with dexterity but less physical strength might do mending, older people with less mobility would keep watch, those with both strength and mobility were especially needed for logistics in a country with few rail lines or paved roads. For movement and distribution of supplies the Việt Minh mobilized supporters into an auxiliary force. According to one historian, "[t]he auxiliary force was organized in groups of 15 men each, with 3 groups making up a section and 3 sections a

company. With this simple organization, the Vietminh accomplished almost incredible logistical feats."[263]

Kenneth Macksey writes: "With hindsight, the French might admit that they never came to understand or calculate the strength of the flexible Viet Minh logistic system. They did not comprehend the thousand upon thousand porters who, ant-like, trudged through jungle paths carrying loads up to 45 lbs per man plus food and equipment: or that, from 1951, thousands of bicycles . . . had been adapted to carry 450 lbs, pushed along the trails. . . . They had not realised that, primitive as the means of Việt Minh transport were, its labyrinthine organization and vast scale made it proof against mere interdiction. . . . As a general rule, even a medium-sized guerrilla movement with a dedicated aim will survive, provided that it is even meagrely supplied from reasonably secure sources."[264]

The Việt Minh were happy to use more intensive transportation—like trucks—if available, but could always fall back on large-scale human power if needed.[265] Many of the same logistical techniques used by the Việt Minh were again used against American occupiers.

The Hồ Chí Minh Trail itself was a crucial logistical structure, allowing the resistance to bring personnel and supplies from North Vietnam to South Vietnam. It included more than sixteen thousand kilometers of braided paths, roads, and waterways which traversed much of Vietnam as well as parts of Laos and Cambodia.

The trail was operated by dedicated support units called *Binh Trams*. Each *Binh Tram* was responsible for a certain area of the trail, which had more than twenty major way-stations and a larger number of mobile stops and small way-stations (many buried underground). These stations served as rest and support stations for mobile personnel who often moved by foot. The *Binh Trams* offered food, shelter, guides, medical care, repair and maintenance of vehicles and equipment, as well as other logistical functions. Vehicle repair was important, because much materiel was moved

by trucks at night and under jungle canopy. The way-stations were often one day's drive apart for this reason. (Trucks would operate in relay style, dropping their load at a nearby way-station and then returning to their home base.) Some *Binh Trams* even erected antiaircraft defenses including antiaircraft guns and surface-to-air missile batteries.

American logistics, on the other hand, were deeply and intrinsically flawed. The United States established a number of stationary logistical bases in the region, connected by convoy routes. Unlike the leaner Vietnamese system, these bases themselves used up much of the materiel delivered through the American supply chain. And the insurgents loved the opportunities represented by stationary targets with fixed, regular supply convoys traveling over land between them. Vietnamese guerrillas constantly raided the convoys for supplies. The United States eventually improved convoy security, but even small losses to the American supply chain were great boons to the spartan logistical networks of the Vietnamese guerrillas.

Liberation fighters in El Salvador in the 1980s faced a different situation, and used different logistical approaches to meet their needs. El Salvador had struggled under a succession of military dictatorships and authoritarian governments since the 1930s, and attempts at peaceful democratic reform in the 1970s had been crushed. The Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) was formed in 1980 as an umbrella front for smaller, preexisting leftist guerrilla groups.

José Angel Moroni Bracamonte and David E. Spencer make a lengthy analysis of FMLN logistics in their book *Strategy and Tactics of the Salvadoran FMLN Guerrillas*:

> "Amateurs study strategy, while professionals study logistics." The FMLN followed this maxim religiously, a fact which was largely responsible for its longevity and high level of military development. The FMLN was seldom short of equipment and,

> during the first years of the war, was often better equipped, supplied, and armed than the government forces. This was because *the infrastructure had been developed over a number of years prior to the outbreak of major hostility.*[266]

Early in the war, the FMLN spread disinformation suggesting that they obtained their arms from black-market dealers and raids on government forces, but in reality more than 90 percent of their equipment and arms came from a network of international supporters, including the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

As the war went on, many international sources of armament dried up, but the FMLN continued to receive weapons smuggled from the Sandinistas. Some were sent though hidden compartments in transport trucks carrying legal commodities, other shipments were sent using fishing trawlers as cover to move up and down the coast, with arms ferried in speedboats that could outrun the ships of the Salvadoran navy. (The speedboats were staffed by combat swimmers, and if the boat were about to be captured, they could detonate an explosive charge on board to sink the boat and then swim to shore.) The speedboats would meet small dugout canoes near shore, and those canoes would rendezvous with guerrilla logistics columns (often in dense mangroves) where the weapons could be cached or distributed by mule or small truck.[267]

Moroni Bracamonte and Spencer note that war materiel wasn't solely imported. "Even though the FMLN received great quantities of weapons from outside El Salvador, over 600 tons in the first few years alone, it also implemented a plan for the massive creation of homemade weaponry such as mortars, rifle grenades, and mines. The refugee camps in Honduras, such as Mesa Grande and Colomoncagua, played an important role in this plan. They provided large quantities of material for the manufacture of mines and homemade weapons. Another important role played by these camps was in the manufacture and provision of uniforms for the guerrillas."[268]

In the early years of the conflict, from 1980 to 1984, the guerrillas traveled with civilian groups, which they called *masses.* These people aided the guerrillas and would often provide food and labor. But the *masses* slowed the guerrillas down, made it difficult to conceal their location, and made the whole column vulnerable to attack.

So the FLMN learned, and adapted. Starting in 1985, the masses were separated from active guerrillas and a new logistics system was set up. Production committees of auxiliaries were set up to coordinate these activities near the guerrilla's operational areas. With the help of local guerrillas, they collected "war taxes" from those living in the area. Logistical "ant columns" (which traveled by foot, mule, and small truck) moved these supplies to depots near guerrilla camps, where they would be further distributed by the cooks and servers in individual guerrilla units. Transportation mostly happened at night. Each camp also had a "brigadist" or paramedic, who provided first aid for the wounded and transported seriously injured people to secret hospitals.[269]

Logistical tasks and roles were set up at each level of the organization. "Within the FMLN organization was a man in each camp, each front, and each organization who held the title of logistician. The logistician was the key individual for the movement and storage of weapons and ammunition. Only the logistician controlled the rationing of weapons and ammunition within a camp. Because of this, the logisticians were considered very important people and worked closely with the commanders of the camps, units, fronts, and organizations." Security concerns played an important role in this arrangement. "The separateness of the logistician was an intentional characteristic of this position and was an attempt by the FMLN to keep general knowledge of the location, quantities, and movement of weapons from the mass of the guerrilla combatants and sympathizers. The FMLN found in the early years that captured guerrillas talked too freely, and as a

consequence the FMLN lost a lot of hard-to-replace materiel to government raids."[270]

Logisticians also arranged the administration of caches. Each FMLN camp had a secret cache nearby; often these were simply large rooms dug into the ground. The entrances were small and camouflaged. The caches themselves were designed to protect weapons, ammunition, explosives, and other material from the elements.[271]

Moroni Bracamonte and Spencer emphasize the importance of logistics for any conflict. "In the final analysis, one of the constant lessons of war is that without the means to fight and to sustain the war effort, a fighting force is doomed. In addition, having a large supply of weapons, equipment, and men [sic] is absolutely useless unless you can deliver those men [sic] and their equipment and weapons effectively to the point at which they are needed, at the time they are needed. . . . Strategy and tactics mean nothing if they are not backed up by a solid logistical system. One of the great accomplishments of the FMLN . . . was . . . setting up a sound logistical foundation . . . one of the key reasons the FMLN was able to last for over twelve years of bitter conflict."[272]

They kept up the fight as long as they needed to. In 1992 peace accords were signed that ended the armed conflict. The FMLN has remained an important cultural institution in the form of a major Salvadoran political party, and their enduring success underscores the necessity of strong logistical capacity.

CHAPTER 11

Actions & Tactics

"It is not the oppressed who determine the means of resistance, but the oppressor."
—Nelson Mandela

STOP HUNTINGDON ANIMAL CRUELTY

England, 1999. A new campaign against animal abuse and vivisection forms; it will spawn thousands of militant actions, drive a corporation to its knees, and put thirteen activists in prison. That campaign is Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (SHAC).

Their target company is Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). HLS has been a target of anti-animal-abuse campaigns for a decade. HLS performs animal testing on behalf of other companies including manufacturers of industrial chemicals, pesticides, cosmetics, cleaning products, and pharmaceuticals. HLS specializes in animal testing and vivisection (the dissection of animals while they are still alive). Animal rights activists recently smuggled undercover videos out of HLS; the leaked video shows mistreatment of animals that goes far beyond "science" as employees punch and beat the animals being experimented on.

PETA and others have led a public campaign against HLS, but legal threats cause PETA to back down. In response, grassroots organizers form a new campaign with a potent new strategy.

SHAC organizers understand that HLS is not susceptible to moral suasion or even public embarrassment. Their customers are other companies, not members of the public. Nor is HLS vulnerable to direct disruption or coercion; activists lack the political force that would be required to shut them down directly.

But HLS does not do business in isolation. HLS has suppliers, shareholders, business partners. For SHAC strategists, these parties *are* the targets. The political force SHAC *can* wield is much more potent against these secondary targets. Less disruption will be required to induce those targets to stop doing business with HLS.

It's a bold and creative strategy. But its scope is ambitious: there are thousands, *tens* of thousands of potential secondary and tertiary targets for the campaign to target. This campaign will require decentralized execution: the involvement of many different local groups, working around the world to disrupt and pressure those targets. It will also require careful planning by the central body, intelligence gathering and intensive analysis of possible targets, and distribution of information about those targets to grassroots groups around the world.

The heart of SHAC is a small group of dedicated organizers who focus heavily on intelligence and communication. "Before announcing a company as a target, careful research is carried out. A picture of the company is built up, copies of their annual reports obtained, lists of subsidiaries, offices, research and manufacturing sites drawn up. Its activities and their weaknesses are identified."[273]

Those core organizers are surrounded by a few hundred loosely affiliated activists who plan and carry out their own actions independently. They use a diversity of tactics to disrupt and harass their targets. Mostly

these tactics include warning letters to shareholders, public education, office disruptions, civil disobedience, some property destruction, and demonstrations at the homes of executives or contractors. The core body then reports on the actions; these reports keep up the morale of activists, allow autonomous groups to copy tactics that work, and inspire new creative acts.

In 2000, SHAC publishes a list of HLS shareholders and stages demonstrations. Shareholders begin to sell off their stock; soon, tens of millions of shares are put up for a penny each. After its share value plummets, HLS is forced off the New York Stock Exchange and loses its main listing on the London Stock Exchange.[274]

The campaign gains steam and accumulates victories. The list of companies driven away from HLS is truly extensive, and soon numbers in the hundreds. Some of these are small companies and contractors, but others are big names: Xerox, Aramark, BDO International, Citibank, Securicor, TD Waterhouse.[275]

SHAC's success will cost organizers dearly. Both Britain and the United States create entirely new legislation, tailor-made to attack groups like SHAC, at the behest of big business. In Britain this is the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act, passed in 2005; in the United States the infamous Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act of 2006. These new laws take advantage of the post-9/11 frenzy to put various kinds of effective activism under the umbrella of terrorism. (HLS is also bailed out by the British government to keep it from going bankrupt.)

Under these new laws many organizers are charged, with prosecutors alleging links to the Animal Liberation Front and other militant underground groups. More than a dozen people end up serving time in prison. But the campaign is able to continue, because when one person is arrested others step forward to take their place.

Despite this repression, SHAC continues and accomplishes much of what its original organizers set out to do. Their victories come from creativity, drive, and an adherence to the strategic and tactical principles that make resistance struggles successful.

■ ■ ■

Action is the ultimate purpose of a resistance movement. Effective actions —effective tactics—emerge from communities of resistance and require the supporting capacities described in the preceding chapters.

These final two chapters are a pair. This chapter deals with *tactics*, the most detailed level of conflict, which includes planning and carrying out particular actions or engagements. *Strategy* deals with the bigger picture, such as planning and carrying out campaigns. (The intermediate level of *operations* deals with things in between. On an even larger scale, *grand strategy* would deal with entire liberation movements over the long term, and with their ultimate goals.)

Strategy and tactics are part of the same continuum, and neither can be discussed in isolation. Tactics can only be evaluated in the context of a good strategy. And strategies are based on the tactics available. So I'll jump back and forth a bit over these final two chapters.

STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL PRINCIPLES

As a young activist, I was never taught strategy. I was taught some techniques and tactics—how to write a press release, how to hold a blockade, how to treat pepper spray injuries—but mostly I was taught political analysis. That is, what was wrong with the economic and political systems of the status quo.

These things are important. But teaching someone what is wrong with the world without teaching them how to change it can backfire. A torrent of information about atrocities and destruction—without a counterbalancing stream of strategy and organizing ideas—can be a profoundly depressing, disempowering, and demobilizing experience.

We need to study, practice, and teach strategy. Resistance strategy starts from the knowledge that those in power have more resources—guns, tanks, television stations, riot cops—than the resistance movements that fight them. In a pitched battle, those in power almost always win. Resistance movements succeed by being smart, by engaging their enemy when and where the resisters will win.

They do this by following strategic and tactical principles developed over thousands of years in conflicts ranging from guerrilla wars to wildcat strikes to civil disobedience campaigns. Those principles are studied by military officers and guerrilla commanders, because when those people don't follow good strategy the results are immediate, obvious, and often bloody. But too many modern social movements have forgotten about these principles—or never learned them—because they are based on lobbying instead of disruption, and because they don't expect to win.

These principles have been articulated by Sun Tzu and Clausewitz, by Russian Partisans and Latin American guerrillas, by nonviolent action trainers, military theorists, and students of revolution.[276]

Here I've condensed these strategic and tactical patterns down to eleven principles for direct action and disruption. Not all of these are used in every conflict or every struggle. But a successful resistance movement will use many of them, and a few extremely well.

It's not a universal checklist, but a set of recurring patterns that help resistance movements win their battles so that they can win their campaigns. And when a resistance movement fails, you will often see that they have failed to apply these principles.

Let’s start with principle number one:

Clear Objective

Resisters take action with clear and attainable objectives in mind. Ideally their objective is decisive (but it may also be shaping or sustaining). This goal motivates members; it also informs the structure of a movement, its strategy, and its tactics.

If an objective is clear, resisters can look back after an action and assess whether they made progress. SHAC had a clear, attainable, and decisive objective: to drive business away from HLS. The ANC wanted to make South Africa ungovernable under apartheid. Dozens of anti-colonial and anti-occupation movements have had the clear goal of driving out occupiers and achieving autonomy.

What are the immediate reasons for a resistance movement to take action? There are many possible goals. Military strategists distinguish between three different kinds of operations. *Decisive* operations directly accomplish the end goal (or part of it). *Shaping* operations change the conditions of struggle to make victory more likely (helping to accomplish the end goals indirectly). And last, *sustaining* operations support the decisive and shaping actions.

For a guerrilla group in Nazi-occupied Europe, decisive operations could mean assassinating Nazi officers. Shaping operations might include

distributing underground newspapers or gathering intelligence. Sustaining operations might mean raiding a guard post for ammunition, or arranging a supply drop from a friendly power.

For a civil rights group like the Deacons for Defense, decisive operations might include using sit-ins to desegregate a public building. Shaping operations might include armed patrols of Black neighborhoods to deter the KKK, or joint operations with allies like the Congress of Racial Equality. And sustaining operations might mean fundraising or setting up a house to use as headquarters for a campaign.

Every resistance action needs a clear tactical objective that will advance the overall strategy. Clear reasons for action include:

- *Decisive direct action.* To accomplish something directly. The tactical goal may be to disrupt, to take over territory, to blockade something, to destroy a target, or to act in self-defense.
- *Deterrence.* A show of force; to discourage bad actions by those in power. To reduce the likelihood of repression. To demonstrate what might happen if change isn't brought about quickly.
- *Escalation.* To raise the stakes. To maintain the forward trajectory of a campaign. To open up space for less radical action (e.g., Litton Industries bombing, the Overton Window, radical flanking.)
- *Reinforcement and punctuation.* To maintain momentum in a campaign and sustain action in a campaign. The Ruckus Society advises that direct action can be "a dramatic reminder that the problem has not gone away."[277] Or to highlight a target and to focus energy. Ruckus suggests that if a campaign issue seems murky, "take action to clearly define the evil or injustice, and the parties responsible."[278]
- *Morale and defiance.* The Ruckus Society suggests: "Sometimes when a group has suffered a setback and morale is low—or a group is tired from a long struggle—direct action can serve to raise the spirits and renew the struggle." (But they warn against acting for mostly personal/emotional—rather than political—reasons.[279]) Remember the argument made in *Poor*

People's Movements that disruption and defiance are more important than any particular tactic.

- *Solidarity.* To support the struggles of allies or comrades. To build relationships, networks, and movement strength.
- *Recruitment.* To bring in new people. Sometimes actions need to be risky, or secret, or dependent on special skills. But low-risk actions are a good opportunity to recruit new people by inviting them to join in. People who share in one action are much more likely to take part in future actions or support your campaign in other ways, because they'll see themselves as a part of something.
- *Training and capacity building.* To help people practice a new method of action, or to become more comfortable with action. To help radicalize people. To strengthen a group or community through action. To build capacity in a group by planning and carrying out an action that is more ambitious than in the past.
- *Communication.* To send a message or to get attention. To make a point to those in power, to allies, or to people at large.
- *Experimentation and creativity.* To break out of a rut. To share new ideas with other people. To inspire and to provoke thought about different kinds of action outside the commonplace.
- *Provocation.* To provoke a response from those in power, or to distract and harry them. Stan Goff suggests that resisters use "[p]inprick strikes of high frequency to disrupt the enemy decision-cycle."[280] For Saul Alinsky, provoking a response was central: "The enemy properly goaded and guided in his reaction will be your major strength."[281]
- *To gather intelligence.* Like the Citizens' Commission to Investigate the FBI, or scouting missions, or actions intended to probe for a response.
- *To get resources and for logistics.* To get supplies, or to aid in fundraising. To take over a building for use, such as a squat. For guerrillas, this has often meant "battlefield recovery" (frequent attacks on small enemy units to gather arms and equipment).

A good tactic may accomplish several of the above points. Again, direct actions in the SHAC campaign illustrate this point. Yes, some actions were decisive. But deterrence was crucial, and deterrence required wide communication. Every new action was also an experiment, an expression of

solidarity with other people in the campaign, and a way of communicating a message.

As the Ruckus Society, writing about direct action, says: “remember one thing: almost all successful actions occur within the context of an ongoing campaign. This means that political—not only logistical—work has been done before the action.”[282]

The Wobblies often fused many different goals when employing a single tactic. Their strikes were forms of direct action that combined recruitment with deterrence and solidarity. The Wobblies also engaged in a series of “free-speech fights” where IWW organizers asserted their right to speak for and organize unions. Local police in any given town would often try to stop radical unionists from organizing; if a Wobbly was arrested speaking on a street corner, the union would call for others to take their place. Radicals would flood into the town in question; they’d show up at the same street corner, and someone else would stand up to speak about the importance of the union. They’d be arrested; someone else would take their place, and preach on the evils of capitalism. Then *that* person would be arrested, and another Wobbly would stand up to talk about solidarity. And then *they’d* be arrested and so on. Eventually the jails would fill up and the arrested IWW members would cause such a ruckus in prison that the police would have no choice but to release them and to let people speak and organize as they pleased. The free-speech fights combined direct action, deterrence, defiance, and recruitment.

There is sometimes a debate among activists between whether or not actions should be “symbolic.” I think that the history of resistance shows that direct action—decisive action—should be a priority wherever possible. But it’s also true that most actions have a symbolic *component*; they communicate a message to someone, whether it is solidarity to comrades, a warning to those in power, or encouragement to defiance in general.

Indeed, ideally an action is constructed so that all possible outcomes will achieve some of the strategic objectives and move the strategy forward. Let me use an example from the Deacons for Defense. Say the Deacons were planning a sit-in action to desegregate a government building (as they did at Jonesboro library in December 1964).

The Deacons had several operational objectives that they could advance through a sit-in:

Decisive Objectives

- Physically and directly desegregate the library via sit-in.

Shaping Objectives

- Protect the action from repression or violence by police or white vigilantes (deterrence).
- Establish a precedent for desegregation by community action.
- Increase morale and confidence, to show defiance.
- Recruit by example.
- Polarize the issue and induce “neutral” Black community leaders to engage.

Sustaining Objectives

- Strengthen community bonds and build ties to potential supporters.
- Build moral and material support for the Deacons and for related organizations.

There are several possible outcomes. The local powers could concede immediately, thus giving the Deacons a decisive victory (and a boost for

their shaping and sustaining objectives). Such successes immediately pave the way for more action.

Alternately, the group could be attacked by police or vigilantes with violence.[283] This would stop them from meeting their decisive objective at that time, but still advance other goals. Attempts at repression, borne by the Deacons, would raise their profile and support in the community (as was the case in the Alton Crowe shooting back in chapter 2). Repression and polarization might also help force "neutral" community leaders such as teachers or ministers to choose to support the Deacons (as many eventually did) or to side against the activists and be shamed by their own communities.

Each of these outcomes would lead to progress on some front. The most dangerous act would have been for people to do nothing.

Finding a balance between goals that are attainable in the short term and strategically meaningful in the long term is not always easy. But a failure to find this balance can cause a group to collapse. Edward Ericson, writing about university radicals in the 1960s, explains:

> Stripped of rhetorical display, virtually every specific proposal emanating from the radicals proved capable of being absorbed by liberal reformism. So great was the fear of co-optation that radicals were frequently immobilized by the prospect that some of their ideas might be accepted and implemented by the establishment without the concomitant adoption of the total world view out of which their specific suggestions emanate. . . .
>
> The net result of this fear was that radicals sought to insure that their proposals were of such a nature that they could not be co-opted—or adopted at all. They became grotesquely unrealistic. Rather than providing serious alternatives, they supplied only vehicles for the negative critiques which made up the actual

> substance of new radicalism. That also cut the radicals off from the satisfaction of short-range achievements, a satisfaction they desperately needed to maintain morale and momentum. Deprived of the possibility of success, radicals either dropped out of activism in despair or turned their energies upon each other. The fear of co-optation forced them into a vicious circle from which there was no escape.[284]

Classic manifestations of a culture of defeat.

In the War Resisters League training manual, Ed Hedemann writes: “Long range goals are easy, e.g., world peace or no military. But sometimes if short range goals are not clearly defined, then the campaign could be stalled. Short range goals should be *winnable* within the near future (providing a boost and the encouragement needed to keep your group moving toward the longer range goals), *measurable* (you ought to be able to tell when you have accomplished them), set on a *timetable* to allow for periods of evaluation, [and] be a *significant step* towards the long range goal(s).”[285]

Charles Dobson suggests that “a small group should pursue only one objective at a time. A new group should begin with a short-term project with a high probability of success.”[286] For choosing short-term goals, some organizations use the mnemonic SMART; goals should be specific, measureable, attainable, rewarding, and timely. This is a good approach for both short- and medium-term goals.

Offensive / Initiative

US General Eric Shinseki writes: “Warfighting, and by extension less violent actions, depends on a few ‘rules of thumb.’ First, we win on the offense; we must be able to defend well, but you win on the offense. Next, we want to initiate combat on our terms—at a time, in a place, and with a method of our own choosing—not our adversary’s, our choosing. Third, we want to gain the initiative and retain it—never surrender it if possible. Forth, we want to build momentum quickly, and finally, we want to win—decisively.”[287]

You don’t win by sitting around and letting the opposition do whatever they want. You can’t win by letting the enemy attack you whenever it is most convenient and advantageous to them. Success requires going on the offensive.

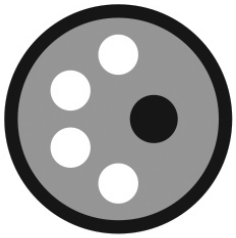
SHAC was very good at this, as *Rolling Thunder* explains: “In contrast to most current organizing strategies, the SHAC model is an offensive approach. It offers a means of attacking and defeating established capitalist projects—of taking the initiative rather than simply responding to the advance of corporate power. SHAC did not set out to block the construction of a new animal testing facility or the passage of new legislation, but to defeat and destroy an animal testing corporation that had existed for decades.”

Greek anarchist Panagiotis Papadimitropoulos explains that the same principle—the idea of attack as a priority—has been at work in Greek uprisings. “Practically this means that the police . . . should not be the ones who attack first. On the contrary it is the anarchists who retain the momentum” and select the time and place of engagement.[288]

Indeed, every successful campaign in this book has gone on the offensive in some way, has seized the initiative, has forced those in power to play catch-up. The Freedom Rides absolutely took the initiative in a way that the Southern establishment did not expect and was unprepared for. So did the PAIGC, so did the ANC and the original IRA. So did the militants at Stonewall when they decided to fight back and to riot. So did the people of Grassy Narrows when they stopped *asking* and started blockading. So did the saboteurs of the Elaho Valley when the stationary tree-sits were taken down, and clandestine attack became the only viable way of stopping the logging.

You can make a campaign work without *some* of the principles in this chapter, but I don’t think you can win without initiative. Gene Sharp argues: “For achieving effective nonviolent struggles it is important that the resisters both seize the initiative at the beginning and also maintain it throughout the conflict. The resisters must not permit themselves to be relegated to the role of primarily reacting to the actions of their opponents.”[289]

Stan Goff concludes: “The great guerrilla leaders have shown that *initiative* is the key. When you have it, you are ahead, and when you lose it, you are behind. . . . Warfare is a temporal process. Time matters. Speed matters. Getting inside your enemy’s decision-making cycle and seizing the initiative matters. Taking the offensive matters. There is no due process. There are no time-outs. And there is no perfection.”[290]



Concentration

Scattered, isolated forces are easily overwhelmed and defeated. Effective resisters concentrate their efforts so that they will have overwhelming force where it matters. They focus on the points of greatest leverage, where their actions will have the most impact. Where the resisters are strong and where those in power are not; where resisters have superior force or odds.

Saboteurs at the Elaho Valley knew this well. They didn't walk up to the headquarters of Interfor to start a fistfight with a security guard. They watched, and waited, and went quickly and quietly to poorly guarded sites to destroy equipment with minimal risk. One of the most decisive Indigenous military victories—the battle at Little Bighorn—occurred when the arrogant General Custer and his cavalry were outnumbered and obliterated by Crazy Horse and several thousand Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho warriors. It was among the US military's most devastating battles in history.

Irish resisters learned this principle the hard way after the Easter Rising; they concentrated their forces to occupy government buildings, but they did it in a way that sacrificed their mobility and flexibility and that committed them to long-duration action. So they soon found themselves outmatched by a superior force. Only when they switched their approach—to isolate and attack smaller targets with their own overwhelming force—did the tide of conflict shift in their favor.

Resisters in occupied Europe trained by the SOE were taught always to plan their escape route from an action first, and to only stage an attack when they were almost totally certain they could pull it off successfully. Small resistance movements are too weak—and their morale too brittle—to squander resources and lives in attacks with low odds for success.

The concentration of force was also where SHAC's strategy really shone. SHAC understood that they couldn't generate the amount of political force necessary to shut down HLS directly. So they chose secondary targets where they could apply superior force, where they knew they were likely to win.

Effective tactics offer a good return on investment. The tactics used by SHAC were not expensive; they required a lot of time from some people, but they didn't demand any special equipment or investments. Spray-paint and fliers are cheap. But SHAC cost HLS and its associates many millions of dollars. The ANC was similarly low-tech in its attacks on apartheid, and many others have followed in this tradition.

An especially effective example was a set of simultaneous natural gas pipeline bombings in Mexico in September of 2007.[291] Staged by a small Marxist group called Ejército Popular Revolucionario, the bombings injured no one but caused massive economic disruption and factory shutdowns. John Robb writes: "Network effects turned a $2,000 attack into $2.5 billion in damages. It was so effective, the group did exactly the same thing a month later. Nobody was caught."[292]

The principle of superior odds is most visible when it is *not* followed. Political dissidents too often fight on the enemy's terrain by their rules. Parliamentary requests, courts, and official grievance processes are all designed so that dissidents have the odds stacked against them. (Recall how authorities were able to take the steam out of Depression-era poor people's movements by routing defiant disruption into formal grievance processes.)

Target Selection Factors

There are five key target selection criteria used to assess and prioritize potential targets: accessibility, vulnerability, recuperability, criticality, and threat. These factors come from the military, but they transfer well to nonviolent struggle or to any campaign of disruption or confrontation, whether a group is using sabotage or mass sit-ins.

Accessibility. How easy is it to get to the target? Accessible targets can be reached with a minimum of trouble and fuss (like a ground floor office downtown in a major city). Inaccessible targets require more resources and planning; perhaps a remote mining site, or a fortified school for mercenaries.

Vulnerability. How easy is it to disrupt the target? Highly vulnerable targets are easy to disrupt, the way that a railway spur line could be blocked by parking a vehicle across it, or an open public relations event shut down by belligerent protesters. Targets with low vulnerability—like a concrete bunker or a closed conference ringed with riot police—are tougher to disrupt.

Recuperability. How quickly can those in power repair the target or restore it to normal functioning? A broken window or blown circuit breaker is fast to repair: high recuperability. A very expensive or rare piece of equipment—say, some specialized, imported heavy machinery—has low recuperability.

Criticality. How important is the target in the system of power? Targets with low criticality will cause a minimum of disruption to those in power if they are damaged (such as a broken window). Targets with high criticality will cause significant disruption or disarray (such as a power plant or major highway).

Threat. How dangerous or damaging is the target to our side?

A common mistake of inexperienced movements is to go after accessible and recuperable targets that are simply not very important (like smashing a store window). The result may be a lot of noise and some aggravation for those in power without substantial disruption. However, depending on the goals of the action, a target's importance may be symbolic as well as material. Say you are trying to shut down a series of toxic waste dumps. If you want to blockade one, you might blockade a dump which is already most notorious—rather than simply the largest one—because the attention might help with your outreach and allow you to mobilize more people and resources in the campaign going forward.

An important factor for most resistance movements is also that the target or the action be *visible* in some way. This makes the action more likely to inspire others, or to be useful as propaganda by deed.

Part of building superior odds is choosing tactics that match the movement—that allow it to maximize force. A movement that is numerically large but not very militant will maximize the force it can generate by choosing lower risk tactics like mass boycotts, nonviolent protests (or other lowest common denominator tactics). On the other hand, a movement that is numerically small but highly dedicated and militant may be able to maximize its generation of force through higher risk, confrontational actions.

As *Rolling Thunder* explained: "While the vegan outreach campaign sought to appeal to the lowest common denominator in order to win over consumers, SHAC attracted militants who wanted to make the most efficient use of their individual efforts. Some reasoned that it was unlikely that the entire market base for animal products would be won over to veganism. . . . But practically everyone could agree that punching puppies is inexcusable."[293] (In keeping with advice from the Communications

chapter, they chose to “focus on the small part that is unacceptable to most.”)

Target selection is absolutely crucial (see sidebar). Good target selection goes hand in hand with intelligence.

Mobility / Flexibility

To win, resisters must be able to choose to engage where they have superior force, using the tactics that will give them the advantage. That may mean having physical mobility, or it may mean tactical flexibility and agility.

A guerrilla movement needs literal mobility; the ability to move and maneuver to attack from advantageous positions, while avoiding or retreating from dangerous ones. But for resistance movements more generally, flexibility is about shifting between different tactics; switching away from tactics that are becoming less effective, using new tactics, and varying their tactical mix.

Effective movements maintain this necessary flexibility by avoiding a doctrinaire or purist approach to tactics. They adjust their tactics as needed to suit circumstances—like the suffragist WSPU—and they allow participants to exercise a variety of tactics suited to their situations, like SHAC.

Rolling Thunder observes that SHAC's "campaign offered participants a wide range of options, including civil disobedience, office disruptions, property destruction, call-ins, pranks, tabling, and home demonstrations. In contrast to the heyday of anti-globalization summit-hopping, targets were available all around the country, limited only by activists' imaginations and research. The intermediate goals of forcing specific investors and business partners to disconnect from HLS were often easily accomplished, providing immediate gratification to participants." Compared to "the massive symbolic actions of the [early 2000s] antiwar movement, the SHAC campaign was a hotbed of experimentation, in which new tactics were constantly being tested."

This distinction between the mostly decentralized SHAC approach and the mass antiwar marches is echoed in the idea of *the cathedral and the bazaar.*

The Cathedral and the Bazaar

In 1997, programmer Eric S. Raymond published an essay distinguishing between two fundamentally different organizational models. One he called "the cathedral," which was centrally planned and closed. The other he called "the bazaar"—like an open market—a decentralized and somewhat anarchic approach to problem-solving. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* is the cathedral; Wikipedia is the bazaar.

Raymond was writing about software development, but the core idea has been applied to insurgencies by people like John Robb, who writes: "The bazaar solves the problem: how do small, potentially antagonistic networks combine to conduct war?"[294]

The centralized cathedral style has been used by many movements, from Greenpeace to the Việt Minh. It has strength in its ability to coordinate

and to take on large, well-organized enemies. But decentralized bazaar-style movements often have superior agility and tactical diversity.

SHAC was the perfect example of bazaar-style organizing. Diverse groups experimented with different tactics, publicized their results, and other groups applied what they saw and experimented again. It's open-source resistance.

The civil rights movement used both styles of organizing. Martin Luther King preferred the cathedral style, and that's certainly the style that has received most historical coverage. But grassroots organizers often used the bazaar approach, combining direct action with communication and outreach.

Civil rights organizer Marvin Rich explained that their direct actions, like sit-ins, were part disruption and part education. New tactics "were being demonstrated in a public form, so people would just walk by and see it. And people who didn't think things were possible saw that they were possible, and six months later, in their own home town, they may try it out."[295] Local imitation and modification is crucial to the bazaar approach.

Actions that work become an enduring part of a culture of resistance, tools to be produced as needed in future. Many people think of sit-ins as a 1960s phenomenon, but their use by civil rights activists dated back to the late 1930s, if not earlier.[296] They became commonplace in the late 1950s and early 1960s because social and political factors allowed them to proliferate through imitation. (The bazaar requires a "co-optable communications network"—to use Jo Freeman's term—to publicize actions so other people and groups can imitate and modify them.)

This difference between cathedral and bazaar style organizing is mirrored in some of Ann Hansen's action. She told me that Direct Action's bombing of Litton Industries—a highly planned, highly technical affair—was so spectacular that it was difficult for people to identify with. At the same time, it brought down an extreme level of surveillance and repression

that eventually led to their capture. On the other hand, the Wimmin's Fire Brigade attacks on Red Hot Video stores were low-tech, decentralized, and easy for people to identify with. (And the police response triggered was mostly directed at the Red Hot Video owners.)

Italian anarchist magazine *ProvocAzione* argued: "The method of direct attack against small objectives spread over the social territory is far more effective than the great spectacular actions and demonstrations that are as spectacular as they are innocuous. The State knows very well how to manage and exploit these grand actions. . . . What it does not know . . . is how to control and prevent simple direct attacks against the distribution . . . of structures that are responsible for projects of repression and death."[297]

The Bolt Weevils of the 1970s are another perfect example. In fighting the expansion of high-voltage power lines in rural Minnesota, this clandestine group destroyed fourteen power line towers and shot out ten thousand insulators. In the winter of 1978, half of Minnesota's highway patrol officers were devoted to protecting construction. Private security was hired and police used helicopters to patrol.

The company turned the line over to the federal government and it was eventually completed.[298] But no Bolt Weevil ever went to jail.

The speed and agility of the bazaar approach is central to its effectiveness. Stan Goff writes: "In most cases, ten actions against one adversary in ten weeks—each designed to disorient one's adversary, even if they are not perfect actions—will be more effective than one action in ten weeks that is part of a highly formal strategic scheme."[299]

Which brings us to another principle of struggle.

Coordination

Some form of coordination and effective decision-making is needed to hold efforts together, both in individual actions and in the larger campaign strategy. Disorganized and scattered resisters are easily isolated and mopped up. Armed guerrillas often have unity of command; a military hierarchy is in place during conflict. Even for nonhierarchical groups a process is needed to make decisions quickly during tactical emergencies.

An effective decision-making process is even more important for resisters than for those in power. A modern army of occupation—even if poorly administrated—has superior firepower, numbers, and training to most resistance movements. To maximize their smaller numbers and limited political force, resisters have to maximize their coordination. Clear decision-making allows a resistance movement to have greatest effect by avoiding confusion or conflicting efforts, and to focus energy and resources on the best targets and tactics.

Effective decision-making doesn’t have to be a single unified structure or hierarchy. It can be participatory decision-making that strengthens an action by making many people feel involved and invested (and by including many different perspectives and possible courses of action). What’s really important is that the decision-making process is suitable to the task at hand, whether that means highly participatory or command oriented. Overly discussion-based methods can backfire in some situations, overly directive

methods cause problems in others. I discussed this in more detail back in the Groups & Organization chapter.

The SHAC activists in general had a highly autonomous decision-making structure which was ideal for carrying out a large number of small, creative, mostly low-risk actions suited to local targets and circumstances.

Surprise

Surprise is fundamental to disruptive actions. Resisters often contend with large, formally organized bureaucracies that are powerful but slower to respond. Resisters use surprise to create and exploit tactical and strategic advantages.

Surprise is a powerful tool for all kinds of resistance movements. Armed guerrilla movements use it constantly in surprise attacks, ambushes, and other engagements. Nonviolent groups—from the militant suffragists to the anti-apartheid occupiers at Columbia University—similarly use surprise to multiply the effect of their actions. (Even if the goal is only to raise awareness or getting attention, surprising and fresh action is more successful.) Surprise is *easier* for small, well-organized, or closed groups to use. But even large and inclusive groups can still use it at times, as with the Columbia sit-ins (chapter 4) or Grassy Narrows in their rotating anti-logging blockades (chapter 1).

Surprise is not just important in a tactical sense but also in a strategic sense. Remember what Bert Klandermans wrote: movement cycles are

triggered by tactical innovation. A novel or unexpected tactic will be imitated and spread, overcoming stagnation and giving a temporary advantage to resisters.

Simplicity

Good plans are simple plans. There is a saying that no plan survives contact with the enemy.[300] Needlessly complex plans fall apart in the rapidly changing circumstances of conflict. A US guerrilla warfare manual notes, “simple plans executed on time are better than detailed plans executed late.”[301] Simplicity is important in the best of times, but in emergencies, only simple plans will work.

Complicated plans are difficult to communicate, and in participatory decision-making they take much more time to discuss and come to agreement on. Highly technical, sophisticated actions (like Direct Action’s Litton Industries bombing) are difficult to carry out perfectly and difficult for people to identify with. And the more moving parts, the more chains of interdependent events, the more things there are to go wrong. In the case of the Litton Industries action that included the incomplete receipt of the warning call to security and the premature detonation of the bomb caused by electrical interference from police radios.

Simple plans (like the Wimmin’s Fire Brigade action) are technically straightforward and easier for people to identify with. There are fewer things to go wrong. Simplicity is needed for bazaar-style work. One of Eric

S. Raymond’s principles is that perfection is achieved when there is nothing more that can be taken away; that is, when a plan is as simple as possible. SHAC’s approach was ultimately very simple, which is why many people were able to participate in it.

Careful Planning

Reckless action wastes time and resources, so resistance movements often plan carefully and in advance. Resistance organizers carefully consider many different options and contingencies when planning an action to make sure that they have a high chance of success. This includes intelligence-gathering and recon, ensuring logistics are available, training participants, and so on.

Decentralized direct action groups may need even *more* careful planning than centralized groups. Careful planning ensures that possible options and contingencies have been explored, and that the group already has a sense of several different courses of action, so that it can act cohesively in a rapidly changing situation without a command structure.

The Greek TV station takeover was a perfect example of this; it was participatory and nonhierarchical in implementation, and so required extensive discussion, planning, and rehearsal. Everyone had to know their role exactly and be able to implement it independently, which is not the

case in hierarchal groups (when someone in charge can yell orders during an action).

SHAC's strategy relied on careful research by a central body of full-time cadres. The same level of organizing couldn't have been achieved by every decentralized group; it would have been inefficient for every potential participant to duplicate that intelligence gathering, and lack of intelligence would have been a major barrier.

Finally, these last three principles are a triad, often seen together.

Decentralized Execution

Resistance movements are rarely concentrated or monolithic; they are often made up of numerous small groups, sometimes geographically scattered. They rarely have a clear, unified command hierarchy. Since they can't win by pitched battles, they maximize their force by conducting a large number of small, decentralized actions.

Strategy may be improved by centralized planning, but *tactics* are often more effective when decentralized. Large numbers of decentralized or semi-autonomous groups can magnify the impact of small numbers without the logistical burden of massive and centralized organizations.

Decentralized execution was critical for SHAC. Just as it would have been inefficient for every group to duplicate research, it would have been extremely difficult (and inappropriate) for the central SHAC group to try to

plan and coordinate all of the actions around the UK and in the United States. Decentralized execution allowed a much higher level of tactical agility and strategic unpredictability.

Decentralization also offered some limited protection for SHAC organizers by insulating them from people carrying out attacks (though obviously not enough to avoid jail time completely). Participants, in turn, received some protection from the large number of decentralized actions; most actions undertaken weren't illegal and it wasn't possible for police to investigate every one of thousands of leads.

Both Black Lives Matter and Idle No More have been very effective at staging decentralized actions. And Black Lives Matter, in particular, has become proficient at a very fast response to changing conditions (like a shooting of yet another unarmed person of color).

Small actions can be more easily carried out, analyzed, and improved to make successive actions more effective. Furthermore, prolonged actions are logistically and organizationally draining; that is, they tend to get expensive and boring.

Short Duration Action

Disruption is best achieved quickly. Resisters carry out their action and move on before those in power can bring superior force to bear on resisters. Frequent, short actions are easier to carry out—and more disruptive—than a single perfectly planned and organized action.

Short-duration action is a quintessential guerrilla characteristic, to the point that it has become embodied in action-movie clichés: *Pack light, move fast, get in, get out*, etc. Guerrillas *do* need to combine short-duration actions with surprise so that they can ambush a target, destroy it or steal supplies, and then vanish again before enemy reinforcements arrive.

Of course, it applies to unarmed direct actionists as well, from spray-painters to saboteurs to confrontational community organizers. Seizing and holding territory—whether that's an Irish government building in 1916 or a street intersection in Seattle in 1999—is a difficult task, and it quickly becomes impossible once government artillery and/or riot police arrive. Longer occupations and blockades have their place, but should be initiated only after careful consideration. They can delay bad projects and act as a rallying point, but after a few days or weeks they can feel like a tedious chore and a resource drain if progress is not made or support is not rallied.

Two of Saul Alinsky's rules for radicals dealt with this. He warned that participants should enjoy the tactics being used: "If your people aren't having a ball doing it, there is something very wrong with the tactic." And he cautioned: "A tactic that drags on for too long becomes a drag. Commitment may become ritualistic as people turn to other issues."

That said, these principles aren't a checklist; every one doesn't need to be combined for a given tactic. So if a given long-duration action is, in your situation, a better way to, say, take the initiative, concentrate force, and keep a plan simple, then that tactic may be just great.

Multiple Actions

Resisters often use many small actions—especially simultaneous ones—to overwhelm those in power. Simultaneous actions are especially effective when they embody the principles of short, simple, and decentralized action.

Closely spaced or simultaneous actions are a staple of guerrilla movements. (A Day of Action—when wide autonomous action is called for around a given issue—is the same idea.)

This multiplicity is a key part of the bazaar approach. There are fewer things to go wrong in simple, short actions. And even if something *does* go wrong at one action (as with the Wimmin's Fire Brigade when one target was not destroyed), there are other actions which probably *will* succeed. Or, at least, there is a shorter turnaround time to learn from mistakes.

SHAC's campaign relied on multiple simultaneous actions against thousands of potential secondary targets. A company like HLS could guard or fortify a central laboratory against disruption (small resistance movements cannot stage massive attacks against fortified targets), but it was impossible to defend the thousands of secondary targets available.

■ ■ ■

As I said before, these principles are not a checklist; they are patterns that help to magnify the disruptive force a group can muster. If your group or situation prevents you from using one principle effectively, ask what others you *can* use. For example, I once participated in a blockade of a prison where new cells were being constructed. When the intensity of the police response made it impossible to hold the blockade at that location—we lacked adequate concentration of force—we made up for it by using initiative and mobility. The group relocated to a different target (a bridge

blockade) and then moved on again before police could contain, arrest, or disperse the group.

Successful tactics often use these principles, whether consciously or not. Consider the popularity of the snake march, in which a group of people march along a random path in an urban area, usually to cause disruption. This tactic may have a clear *objective* (such as to disrupt a financial district, or to interrupt the flow of traffic around an event). Snake marchers seize and retain the *initiative*, using *surprise* and *mobility* to avoid being trapped by the police. (Using the snake approach with bicycles can be even more effective because the participants have more mobility than riot police.) The marchers can *concentrate* their mass to outnumber police at any given intersection (although riot police have superior concentration of force if they use kettling to break the march up into confined, manageable chunks). Snake marches with recon capacity can try to avoid concentrations of police. The snake march is a *simple*, *short-duration* tactic that requires minimal planning, logistics, or decision-making. It uses *decentralized execution*, and *multiple* snake marches can happen at the same time.

Movements that have failed to use these principles have a difficult time effecting change or disrupting business as usual. The Occupy movement was not able to exert much political force on those in power in part because its strategy did not include these elements. Though it was confrontational in the sense that members took over public property for the movement, it lacked a clear, attainable goal. Though it went on the offensive when first setting up encampments, it later mostly surrendered the initiative and stayed in stationary positions. Like any long-duration action, the camps were logistically draining to sustain. Without mobility or the element of surprise, camps were easily overwhelmed and shut down at the convenience of police.

The movement did have the benefit of decentralized execution and multiple, simultaneous actions. But I think that the strength of the Occupy

movement was mostly as a tool for communication, recruitment, and training. It was a rallying point for people to meet, network, share ideas, and practice skills. (Many Occupy sites also hosted groups using more disruptive direct action.) I think the beneficial legacy of Occupy comes mostly from those factors, rather than from disruption caused by that movement directly.

Given the choice between doing something imperfect—which will at least tend the fires of resistance—and doing nothing, it's almost always better to do something.

OPERATION BITE BACK

Most successful actions are carefully planned. Proper preparation prevents poor performance, as the saying goes, and preparation is a necessity for effective direct action. The Animal Liberation Front's highly successful Operation Bite Back, in the Pacific Northwest, is a good example.

"As the sun lowered itself on the day of June 10, 1991," recounts an anonymous firsthand report, "six ALF warriors found themselves gathered around a campfire on nearby forest lands checking battery power on radios, reviewing hand drawn and topographical maps, and dressing down in bright college attire to hide the dark clothes they wore underneath. A joy that rarely inhabits our ranks was in the air as we readied ourselves for a night that would bring long-awaited justice to the nation's largest fur farm research station."[302] They have already performed careful reconnaissance of the nearby mink laboratory and chosen a dark night with minimal nearby activity.

"Fanny packs were organized with the assorted equipment necessary to each individual member and cash was distributed to each warrior who would be on foot in case of separation, as well as maps with predetermined

routes out of the area. Easy retreat plans were reviewed, roles were discussed and each warrior would repeat their responsibilities until everyone was assured that they understood every action that would comprise the raid."[303]

They got in to the fur farm quickly and removed marking information from mink cages to confuse the researchers. Some records and documents were stolen for intelligence (such as address and phone books and financial information). The remainder of the records are destroyed along with various samples.[304] An incendiary device on a delay timer was set in an unoccupied supply barn.

"Within minutes all team members regrouped carrying plastic trash bags in their fanny packs containing all tools and evidence of our presence. In a few more minutes with mountain bikes loaded and all confiscated research documents and photos in a safe car, we drove the speed limit across county lines to the nearby interstate where all clothes worn during the action were distributed in various dumpsters. Shoes worn during the action also were thrown away and all tools although new were deposited in the nearest river. At about the same time a fire erupted in the experimental feed barn and demolished the feed supply and all equipment in the barn, as well as the barn itself."

This action, like many successful insurgent operations, used the principles of clear objective, surprise, simplicity, careful planning, and short-duration action.

"The blow was too much for the tight budgeted research lab to endure. When 1991 ended and O.S.U.'s mink herd was killed, O.S.U.'s animal research department decided to cut funds to the fur farm and within six months the Oregon State University Experimental Fur Animal Research Station closed its doors forever. In its first stage, Operation Bite Back had shut down the nations [sic] largest Fur Farm research facility."[305]

And their stolen intelligence helped them plan future actions.

"Once more the ALF had proven that what could not be accomplished with years of protest, could be achieved with a handful of brave-hearted warriors. Now it was time to wait for others to follow our lead."[306]

PLANNING AN ACTION

So what do you need to do to effectively plan an action? Here are some questions to ask, in roughly chronological order. The emphasis here is on disruption, though the same can apply to many different kinds of action.

What is our operational goal? Good tactics flow from good strategy. Choose an actionable goal that is decisive, shaping, or sustaining. Then brainstorm potential tactics and targets to either achieve that goal or make progress toward it.

What is our tactic and target? If you have been preparing, you may already have a list of potential targets (see p. 540). Pick one using functional target selection criteria like accessibility, criticality, and so on. Be clear on how the action will help accomplish your operational goal. (You may also want to plan a series of actions in tandem.)

When you choose your tactic, ask: Will this help advance our campaign? (See chapter 12.) Have we considered all relevant parts of the Taxonomy of Action? (Volume One, p. 99) Will this tactic make use of and develop our capacities for action (e.g., intelligence, recruitment potential, communications, etc.)? At the same time—or even before—also ask:

Who will be involved? And how will decisions be made? Who will help *plan* the action? Who should be consulted? And who will carry it out? The answers depend on your organization, level of openness, the risk level of the action, and the skills and resources required.

Planning and consultation can be great opportunities to connect with allies and build full spectrum resistance. That said, it's good to be cautious when inviting people to become planners, since inviting too many people or inviting the wrong people can slow things down or produce needless conflict. (See Alliances and Coalitions, p. 611.)

Once you know who is involved, organize them into subgroups or roles (if needed) for logistics, planning, training, and so on. (For example, does the action require affinity groups or the use of the buddy system?)

If you are bringing in a larger number of participants beyond your planning group, you'll need to clarify decision-making and ground rules for the operation. Ground rules might include security culture or tactical boundaries. Clearly identify the decision-making structure—and who is part of it—on the ground. Ideally, as much of this as possible should be set up *before* other people are brought in, to avoid conflict and ensure that you can move forward instead of getting tied up in preliminary discussions. (That said, you might need those discussions if the action is *meant* to be part of a coalition-building strategy.)

What intelligence and recon are needed to make the action a success? Ideally your choice of target and tactic are guided by background research; you'll also want detailed information on the place where the action is happening.

As examples for direct action: Who is in a building at specific times? Are there shifts or business hours? What is the likely police or security response? What are the best access routes? (See Reconnaissance and scouting, p. 419) The ALF's diligent recon as part of Operation Bite Back was a primary reason for their success.

What different scenarios might we expect? You'll want a detailed tactical plan that includes different scenarios and contingencies. On a step-by-step basis, how is the action actually going to be carried out on the site?

Where are different people going to be placed? How many people are assigned to each task? Is there a specific command structure on the ground? How will people communicate during the action? Who is responsible for giving the go-ahead or the abort signal? How long do different elements of the action take and what times will they happen at? Anticipate that the real action will play out differently from your ideal plan. Plot out multiple scenarios for the action, keeping in mind how things might go wrong, and how you will respond to them. Remember, also, the strategic and operational principles we've already discussed—such as surprise and initiative—and especially the importance of clear and simple plans. As the US Field Manual on Guerrilla Warfare advises: "Although detailed, the plan for a raid must be essentially simple, and not depend on too many contingencies for its success. Duplicate or alternate arrangements are made for the execution of key operations to increase the chances of success."[307]

What is our exit plan? Remember that for SOE resisters in occupied Europe, the first step of any action was to plan a safe exit. This may be as straightforward as dispersing quickly in small groups, or it may involve covers, vehicles, changing of clothes, disposing of equipment, and the use of safe houses. In general, know when and how the action will end; that could mean making sure a rally doesn't drag on without a conclusive finish, or making sure to disperse stragglers quickly after a snake march so they aren't arrested.

What skills and training are needed? Does everyone involved have the necessary skills? How can we use this action to develop the basic skills needed in a culture of resistance? What training or practice is needed to make this action a success?

It's often important to stage rehearsals or role-plays in advance of an action. This is not just for comfort's sake; it's important to genuinely identify problems rather than simply going through the motions. I've been

part of more than one pre-action role play in which obvious problems were ignored to keep things moving, only to have the same problems crop up, disastrously, in the action itself. These rehearsals also help bind the team together and give an estimate of how long different actions will require. Try to make the practice scenarios as realistic as possible, whether that means doing things in the dark or the cold, traveling long distances, etc. Often, stress is a key element and is difficult to replicate in practice scenarios, but it's important to simulate if possible.[308]

What will be the time and date of the action? There may be a single date on which the action can be carried out, or there may be multiple candidates and fallback dates. When planning supply flights to resisters in occupied Europe, Allied air force commanders had to carefully consider day length, weather forecasts, and moon phase.[309] The date of D-Day was chosen because of a low tide at dawn preceded by night with sufficient moonlight to drop paratroopers before the attack. Candidate dates for an action may depend on weather and moonlight, but also on weekdays, changing shifts, and special events. It's beneficial to have a fallback date or dates in case something goes wrong before the start of the action—say, unexpected activity at the target—but this is more difficult if the action involves coordination with other parties. Once the date is identified, consider drafting a detailed time line of the work that needs to be accomplished before the event.

What security and safety risks might exist? Are there hazards involved in this action? How can you reduce or cope with them? Is there a risk of injury that would call for medics to be on the team? What kind of anti-repression measures do you require? Will people need legal or jail support? Mutual care or psychological support? Ideally, develop skills or organizational capacity that will function in the long term, so that in the future that capacity will be at hand.

Who, if anyone, has the power to call off the action at the eleventh hour if it seems too dangerous or if the situation changes unexpectedly?

What communications or media coverage do we want? Do we want to promote the action in advance, or is it a surprise? Do we want media coverage, and what is our desired framing? What communications materials do we want? (See chapter 7 for more.)

Are there potential side effects or reprisals? How could this affect bystanders? Could this action bring police or legal attention on our allies? Do we need to adjust the action, warn allies, or make other preparations to minimize side effects?

What equipment or materials do we need? Make sure that all gear is adequate for the task, ready, and safe to use—even if that's just a matter of making sure that protest signs show up on time. Make sure that everyone knows how to safely use and troubleshoot the equipment they are expected to operate. Have spares or spare parts for critical gear. Underground groups may need equipment to be untraceable and plan a means for disposal.

Do we have a checklist for the day of the action? I find it invaluable to have a checklist to use in the hours before an action that summarizes who is responsible for what, the equipment needed, the schedule, and other key information. (This kind of checklist might be too sensitive to write down for some actions.) Final tasks could include a check-in, a pep talk, or words of mutual encouragement before an action.

After the action: debrief and analysis. Check in with those involved and ensure that they are physically and psychologically well. Ensure that everything went as planned, or understand where it deviated. Identify what went well and what could be improved. Consider the events immediately afterward, and later with some distance and perspective. Did the action

achieve its desired goal? Was there repression or unexpected disruption? How did the organizers deal with it? Did they have the capacity that was needed? Integrate the lessons learned into your future planning, tactics, and organization.

It's a good exercise to analyze other groups' actions, say from the news, using similar questions.[310]

PEASANT RESISTANCE TACTICS

James C. Scott begins his excellent 1985 book by bemoaning that period's leftist obsession with spectacular wars of nation liberation—like the struggle in Vietnam—as the primary model for resistance. In *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, he warns that such dramatic uprisings are only one form of resistance, and an exceedingly rare one at that. He argues that "subordinate classes throughout most of history have rarely been afforded the luxury of open, organized, political activity. Or, better stated, such activity was dangerous, if not suicidal."[311]

Furthermore, he adds, "for all their importance when they do occur, peasant rebellions—let alone revolutions—are few and far between. The vast majority are crushed unceremoniously. When, more rarely, they do succeed, it is a melancholy fact that the consequences are seldom what the peasantry had in mind."[312] Peasants, he argues, have generally focused their efforts on what you might call *harm reduction*—limiting the severity and damage of exploitation—rather than open revolution with unpredictable results.

James Scott bolsters his argument with a number of historical examples and with his own detailed account of the years he spent in a Malaysian village from 1978 to 1980, when the social costs of the Green Revolution were coming into effect. In general, he writes: "In the Third World it is rare

for peasants to risk an outright confrontation with the authorities over taxes, cropping patterns, development policies, or onerous new laws; instead they are likely to nibble away at such policies by noncompliance, foot dragging, deception. In place of a land invasion, they prefer piecemeal squatting; in place of open mutiny, they prefer desertion; in place of attacks on public or private grain stores, they prefer pilfering. When such stratagems are abandoned in favor of more quixotic action, it is usually a sign of great desperation."[313] (Peasants almost always lean toward bazaar-style organizing.)

Scott points out—as I have argued throughout this book—that movements are most effective when they find a harmonious match between strategy, tactics, and organization. He observes: "Such low-profile techniques are admirably suited to the social structure of the peasantry—a class scattered across the countryside, lacking formal organization, and best equipped for extended, guerrilla-style, defensive campaigns of attrition. Their individual acts of foot dragging and evasion, reinforced by a venerable popular culture of resistance and multiplied many thousand-fold, may, in the end, make an utter shambles of the policies dreamed up by their would-be superiors in the capital."[314]

He notes, in a lovely ecological analogy: "Everyday forms of resistance make no headlines. But just as millions of anthozoan polyps create, willy-nilly, a coral reef, so do the multiple acts of peasant insubordination and evasion create political and economic barrier reefs of their own. It is largely in this fashion that the peasantry makes its political presence felt. And whenever, to pursue the simile, the ship of state runs aground on such reefs, attention is usually directed to the shipwreck itself and not to the vast aggregation of petty acts that made it possible."[315] This is how a culture of resistance works.

He does caution that "[i]t would be a grave mistake, as it is with peasant rebellions, to overly romanticize the 'weapons of the weak.' They are

unlikely to do more than marginally affect the various forms of exploitation that peasants confront."[316] That said, "[e]ven a casual reading of the literature on rural 'development' yields a rich harvest of unpopular government schemes and programs nibbled to extinction by the passive resistance of the peasantry."[317]

This type of low-level resistance, Scott notes, has parallels in the tactics of slaves in the antebellum American South, and of those oppressed by the caste system in India. Edward B. Harper writes:

> Lifelong indentured servants most characteristically expressed discontent about their relationship with their master by performing work carelessly and inefficiently. They could intentionally or unconsciously feign illness, ignorance, or incompetence, driving their masters to distraction. Even though the master could retaliate by refusing to give his servant the extra fringe benefits, he was still obliged to maintain him at a subsistence level if he did not want to lose his investment completely. This method of passive resistance, provided it was not expressed as open defiance, was nearly unbeatable.[318]

James Scott writes: "It is only rarely that the perpetrators of these petty acts seek to call attention to themselves. Their safety lies in their anonymity. It is also extremely rare that officials of the state wish to publicize the insubordination. To do so would be to admit that their policy is unpopular, and, above all, to expose the tenuousness of their authority in the countryside—neither of which the sovereign state finds in its interest."[319] Hence, such acts are often absent from the history books.

Scott spent his time in Malaysia when the economic situation for peasants was generally worsening because of the industrialization of agriculture. The gradual introduction of the combine harvester for rice crops removed an important source of income (and political leverage) for those

who worked as harvesters. Poverty and the class disparity were growing. At the same time, emboldened landlords engaged in excessive rent, land theft, and all the aspects of peasant exploitation that we have come to expect from capitalism.[320]

The impacts of the Green Revolution and capitalism were mostly gradual enough that they didn't provoke a single uprising. Though each year some people would see a significant downturn in their livelihood, these economic and political changes did not simultaneously threaten every peasant in the village. And the introduction of the combine created new challenges for resistance. Peasants could fight traditional means of exploitation by "working slow" or withdrawing their labor. But the combine harvester didn't exploit the peasants—it simply took them out of the equation. It's difficult to go on strike if you are unemployed.[321]

These trends brought out resistance. But, Scott writes, the tactics used "reflect the conditions and constraints under which they are generated. If they are open, they are rarely collective, and, if they are collective, they are rarely open. The encounters seldom amount to more than 'incidents,' the results are usually inconclusive, and the perpetrators move under cover of darkness or anonymity, melting back into the 'civilian' population for protective cover."[322] The political weakness of the peasants—and the possibility of landlord and state reprisal—required clandestine organizing.

Peasant resistance in Malaysia included—as movements typically do—a diversity of tactics. Some forms of noncooperation, like strikes, were used. But they were often more subtle than a rowdy picket line. For example, women harvesters may have simply failed to return to harvest after lunch. The farmer would then have to send someone to offer a modest wage increase. The job action may not have even been called a strike.

Scott notes that other harvesters in the same village would not take over a harvest stopped midway; they would not scab.[323] "Such minimal solidarity depends, here as elsewhere, not just on a seemly regard for one's

fellows, but on the sanctions that the poor can bring to bear to keep one another in line. Since the temptation to break ranks is always alluring to members of a class that has chronic difficulty making ends meet. . . . The modest level of restraint that has been achieved makes ample use of social sanctions such as gossip, character assassination, and public shunning."[324]

The introduction of the combine harvester provoked a variety of resistance actions including circumspect strikes and boycotts, physical blockades, sabotage, arson, and the intimidation of landlords.[325] Few people would discuss the details of clandestine action with Scott, but he did find some accounts of sabotage against the combines:

> Batteries were removed from the machines and thrown in irrigation ditches; carburetors and other vital parts such as distributors and air filters were smashed; sand and mud were put into the gas tank; and various objects (stones, wire, nails) were thrown into the augers. Two aspects of this sabotage deserve particular emphasis. First, it was clear that the goal of the saboteurs was not simple theft, for nothing was actually stolen. Second, all of the sabotage was carried out at night by individuals or small groups acting anonymously. They were, furthermore, shielded by their fellow villagers who, if they knew who was involved, claimed total ignorance when the police came to investigate. As a result, no prosecutions were ever made.[326]

In some cases, peasants stalled the rollout of combines because of subtle intimidation or threats of violence.[327] All in all, these efforts delayed but did not stop the introduction of the machines. Which is, perhaps, no surprise. Within the context of voracious capitalism, supplied by cheap fossil energy, piecemeal action is almost always a delaying tactic. After the combines were introduced, many people reported to Scott that they wished they had acted more decisively, and with more unity, to stop the

machines.[328] To convert isolated actions into a serious strategy for resistance is one of the most important—and most difficult—tasks of any movement.

Of course, just having the *idea* of a strategy is not enough to put it into place. Winning strategy requires all of the capacities we've discussed in this book. It requires strong organizations—on different scales and of different sizes—and the ability to recruit people into them. It requires security to protect those people, and the logistics to support more intensive struggle.

Success requires more than the "weapons of the weak." To win, we have to build movements and organizations that make us *strong*, that let us move beyond scattered half-measures to engage in real collective action.

When a movement succeeds in this—even temporarily—the results can be inspiring and, depending on the outcome, heartbreaking. Which brings us to the North-West Rebellion.

THE NORTH-WEST REBELLION

In 1885, Métis and Cree people (living in what is now called Saskatchewan) decided to fight back against continued encroachment and colonialism. Their uprising became known as the North-West Rebellion, one of the most important campaigns against the "settling of the West." As an act of resistance, it continues to inspire, but much of its early promise went unfulfilled. I want to explore what happened in that rebellion—what worked and what didn't.

Early Canadian colonizers were less reliant on outright massacres and armed occupation than colonizers in other parts of the Americas. Because of the vast land area of Canada and challenges posed by its terrain and climate, early colonization often depended on gaining cooperation from

Indigenous people. The Hudson's Bay Company was initially dependent on trade with Indigenous people for valuable furs demanded in Europe.

Starting in the 1600s, the Hudson's Bay Company—which would act as a de facto government in much of Canada—built trading posts that would later become forts and settlements. It expanded through a network of traditional trails that it would help turn into roads and railways. And male European traders and trappers (like the French voyageurs) sometimes married Indigenous women; their offspring were called *Métis*, and became an enduring culture that blended Indigenous and French/European traditions.

Despite an early need for trade, Canadian colonialism became increasingly violent as the number and power of Europeans grew. In the east, Indigenous peoples had their land stolen and were forced onto reservations. The government of Canada carried out cultural genocide through programs like the residential schools. And colonial powers looked west, to the prairies, for more land to devour.

In 1869, the government of Canada bought the territory "owned" by the Hudson's Bay Company, and sent surveyors to lead the (mostly Anglophone) settlement of the area. Métis—who had no official title to their lands under the colonial system—were afraid they would lose their lands and see their culture overwhelmed. Around the Red River (in what became Manitoba), Métis rebelled, some under the leadership of Métis man Louis Riel (who had been born in the area but was trained in the seminary and law in Montreal). The Métis set up their own provisional government and stopped the surveyors. Riel issued a list of demands and planned to negotiate with the Canadian government. This first uprising became known as the Red River Rebellion.

As this rebellion was underway, some Anglo settlers decided to try to overthrow the Métis provisional government by force of arms. But they were captured and put on trial by the provisional government. One of them

—Thomas Scott—was executed by firing squad at Riel's insistence (probably to send a message that the Métis meant business). Many historians believe this execution was a major mistake. In response to Scott's death, the Canadian government sent an armed militia to put down the resistance and impose Canadian political authority.

Before those troops arrived, Louis Riel fled across the border to the United States. The Red River Rebellion was put down, though some its demands would later be met with the formation of the new province of Manitoba. Riel traveled for a while, and was elected as a member of parliament three times (though he never sat in parliament). He became increasingly obsessed with the idea that he was the divinely ordained leader of the Métis. His mental health worsened; he had a nervous breakdown, and was institutionalized at an asylum in Quebec.[329] He spent nearly two years there; he would pray standing up for hours on end, getting servants to help hold his arms outstretched like Christ on the cross.[330] After he left the asylum in 1878, he moved to Montana and got married.

Prelude to Rebellion: Riel and Dumont

Though some Métis demands had been met, the situation for Métis and Indigenous people worsened in the decade after the Red River Rebellion. The herds of buffalo had been effectively eradicated. As Indigenous people were forced onto reservations, the Canadian government deliberately kept them on a starvation diet.[331] Many Métis were part-time farmers, but 1884 saw a poor harvest because of terrible weather. Métis and Indigenous people saw their grievances ignored or stonewalled by the Canadian government and continued to be displaced by a growing flood of Anglo settlers.[332]

Some histories treat Louis Riel as the sole leader of the North-West Rebellion. Riel's eventual execution made him into a martyred figure (and so more appealing to liberals). But there were many factions at play, and many leaders. Among the Cree, Big Bear and Poundmaker were important figures. But I'm going to focus here on two Métis leaders—Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont—because their interactions are so illuminating and, in some troubling ways, so familiar among resistance movements.

Riel was the figurehead, the public speaker, and the would-be messiah. His colleague Gabriel Dumont was a skilled commander and strategist, an experienced leader of buffalo hunts and skirmishes on the plains. Riel was a man educated by the colonial system, well versed in colonial politics. Dumont was illiterate, but could speak six Indigenous languages along with French.[333] Riel had politicked with the federal government; Dumont had strong ties to Indigenous people and had negotiated many truces on the plains.[334]

I'm going to draw especially on the work of radical historian George Woodcock, whose biography of Gabriel Dumont examines aspects of the rebellion that more conventional historians overlook. Woodcock writes that "Dumont was the natural man par excellence, adapted perfectly to the life of the wilderness, and in this way he was profoundly different from Riel, who was as alienated as any modern Canadian from that existence. Riel may have been a defender of the past, but like many such defenders he did not belong to what he defended."[335]

Riel's viewpoint reflected both his alienation from traditional ways and his faith in the basic colonial system. Woodcock believes that Riel "doubtless assumed that the right legislation would immediately rectify matters. He was a very modern man in his illusion that within a cage of political action one might preserve the vanishing splendours of a free and natural life."[336] Riel was, in other words, a liberal; someone who believed an adjustment of the status quo would be sufficient.

But Riel was well known as a leader of the Red River Rebellion. So when some Métis decided that organized rebellion was necessary, it was Riel they chose to approach. Gabriel Dumont led an expedition to Montana to ask Riel to return north. Riel—flattered that his divine destiny was being recognized—enthusiastically agreed.

But there was a deep problem, as Woodcock explains: "What Dumont and his comrades did not take into account was the veering in Riel's mind away from rationality during the years since he rode away. . . . If the Métis expected a political leader, they received a prophet, and *exalté*, a prairie Gandhi without Gandhi's consistency, for Riel developed desperate policies that could succeed only by means of violence, and yet he shrank from violence when it came."[337]

The Rebellion Begins

After Louis Riel arrived (in what is now Saskatchewan), the rebellion began much as it had sixteen years previously in Manitoba. The Métis founded a provisional government in Batoche (see map, figure 11-1) and began to consolidate their position.

Dumont immediately raised about three hundred men and organized them into a militia. He chose a house in Batoche as his military headquarters. He appointed two scout captains, each of whom was assigned ten of the best riders, to patrol either side of the Saskatchewan River. He then divided the remaining fighters into ten companies, each led by a captain he hand-picked.[338]

Dumont wanted to join forces with First Nations such as the Cree. Indeed, many Métis were hoping for an alliance with First Nations, an alliance which Dumont had prepared the way for in the years after 1870. His proposed plan was that "the campaign should begin with surprise

assaults on Fort Carlton and Prince Albert, and the capture of the stores of arms and ammunition in these places."[339] Dumont also knew—experienced in provisioning hunting parties and his own community—that attacks would yield much-needed supplies and munitions.

In Dumont's plan, after the forts and their supply stockpiles were taken, Dumont and Métis forces would head southeast to attack the railway itself. They would destroy telegraph lines and tracks, ambushing or derailing the trains of any military reinforcements that arrived. These attacks would supply them with high-quality arms and ammunition they were desperately in need of. They would deprive the Canadian government a major advantage: fast transportation through an area that the rebels knew better and could traverse more easily.

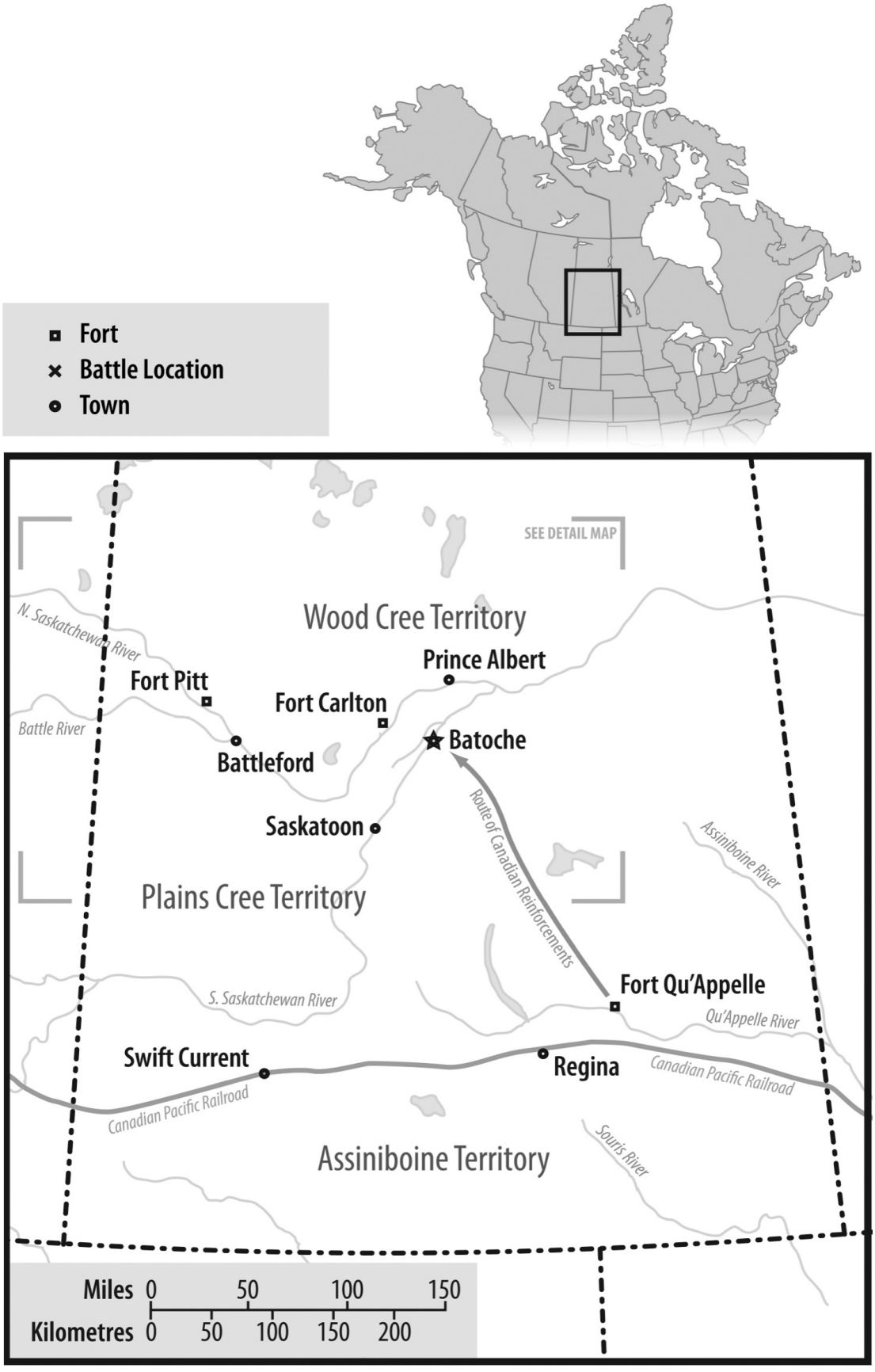
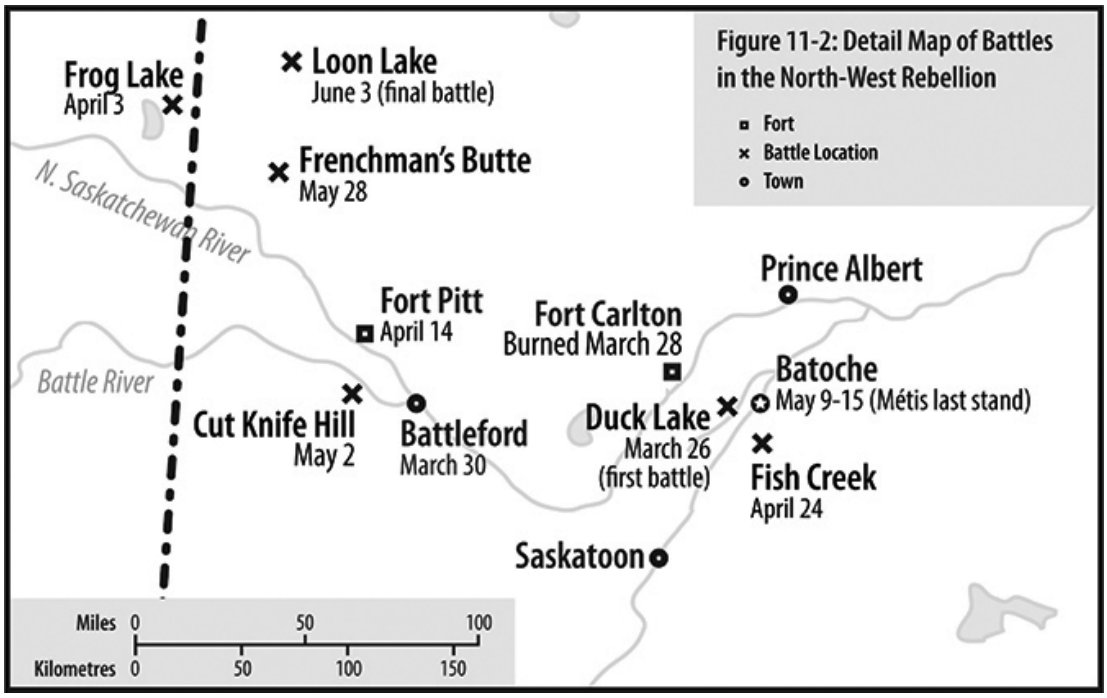

Fort
Battle Location
Town
SEE DETAIL MAP
Wood Cree Territory
N. Saskatchewan River
Prince Albert
Fort Pitt
Fort Carlton
Battle River
Batoche
Battleford
Saskatoon
Route of Canadian Reinforcements
Assiniboine River
Plains Cree Territory
S. Saskatchewan River
Fort Qu'Appelle
Qu'Appelle River
Swift Current
Regina
Canadian Pacific Railroad
Canadian Pacific Railroad
Souris River
Assiniboine Territory
Miles 0 50 100 150
Kilometres 0 50 100 150 200

Figure 11-1: Major Locations in the North-West Rebellion

This map shows major locations during the 1885 uprising of Metis and indigenous people. Modern Canadian provincial boundaries are shown for clarity.

Once the forts had been taken and the railways severed, Dumont planned to use guerrilla warfare against military reinforcements that arrived on foot or by boat along the river. As they won victories, neutral groups would begin to support the uprising. Dumont knew that they could not drive the European settlers out of the plains entirely and did not seek to. But if Dumont's strategy had been implemented freely, they could have held that territory long enough to negotiate a nation-to-nation agreement with the government of Canada and rally the force needed to compel Canada to abide by its previous agreements and treaties.

Woodcock argues: "If later historical examples like that of Ireland between 1919 and 1921 are anything to go by, [Dumont's] strategy stood at least a sporting chance of success. It was Riel's attempt to win by a *show* of violence instead of by its reality that doomed the 1885 rebellion from the start." As Woodcock writes, "however violently [Riel] might talk when no specific action was involved, he lacked [Dumont]'s willingness to accept without qualm the fact that war meant fighting."[340] Louis Riel, in other words, was a rare combination: the *militant liberal*. Even his execution of Thomas Scott had been a largely symbolic act, and repression brought down by that execution in the previous rebellion likely make Riel more gun-shy.[341]



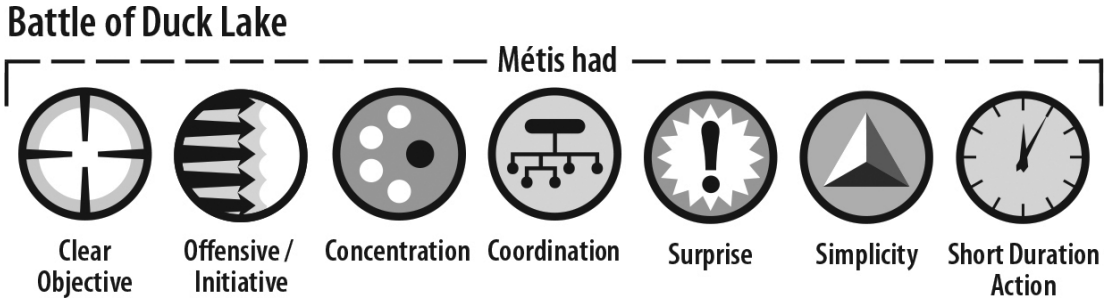
So instead of building a fighting coalition, Riel insisted on other priorities. Shortly after the provisional government was put in place, Riel used the governing council to pass a series of religious edicts. One resolution proclaimed that Hell was not everlasting, as this was not compatible with the idea of a merciful God. Another moved the Sabbath to Saturday. Yet another renamed the days of the week, replacing the pagan name “Monday” with “Christaurore,” Tuesday with “Viergeaurore,” and so on. Priests inevitably objected, and Riel told them that the Pope was no longer infallible and that Riel himself had been chosen as God’s representative.

Riel quashed Dumont’s plan to stage surprise attacks on Fort Carlton and Prince Albert, and insisted on keeping their force in and around Batoche. This was Riel’s “City of God”; he had a vision of a glorious victory there. Though Dumont had reached out to Indigenous groups in the area, many of them—understandably wary of direct armed conflict with the Canadian government—waited and watched to see if success was likely or

possible. Without going on the offensive, it was impossible for Riel and Dumont to demonstrate the potential for victory.

Riel's obsession with his religious visions, and his refusal to listen to Dumont's excellent strategy, neutralized the main advantages the Métis had: surprise, initiative, and mobility. Riel's non-strategy ignored the value of the Métis intelligence network of scouts. And it prevented the Métis from compensating for their limitations, especially logistical weaknesses like an inadequate supply of munitions.

Despite these limitations, both the Métis and the Cree would prove their incredible skill and tactical abilities in the battles that followed.



After the provisional government was declared on March 19, 1885, Riel sent a message to the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) to ask for the bloodless surrender of Fort Carlton. This was rejected by the NWMP. Instead, commander Leif Crozier decided he would make an example of the Métis. In need of supplies, Crozier marched a force of ninety-five men toward a general store at Duck Lake (see Figure 11-2, Detail Map of Battles in the North-West Rebellion).

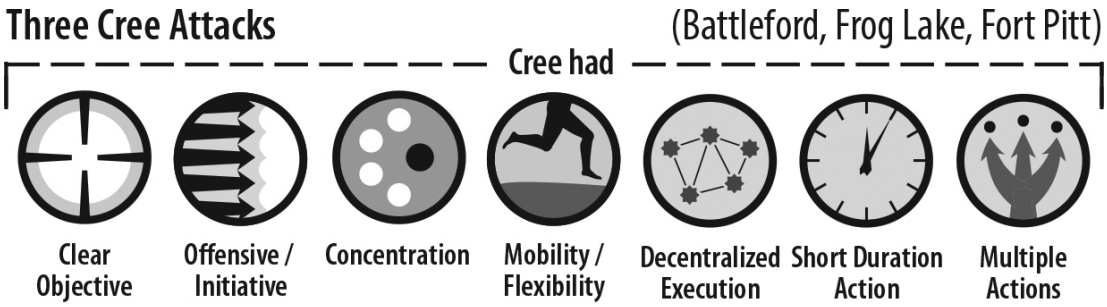
What Crozier didn't know was that Dumont—also in need of supplies—had anticipated this move and had traveled to Duck Lake with more than 250 fighters. Dumont's fighters had already moved into fortified positions in and around log cabins at the site. On March 26, Crozier marched up, spotted the ambush, and opened fire. His troops were better armed and had

a cannon to use against the log cabins, whereas Dumont didn't even have enough guns for his own fighters.

During the battle Dumont was injured by a bullet across his scalp, a head wound that would bleed profusely for days. Dumont's brother was killed, along with four others on the Métis side. But with their superior positioning and numbers, the Métis overwhelmed their better-armed foes, killing ten and wounding eleven before Crozier ordered a retreat. Dumont, though wounded, wanted to pursue them, as they would have been easily defeated. Riel insisted that they allow the NWMP to leave without more bloodshed.

Because of Riel's refusal to engage, the Métis were unable to capture Crozier and his force as prisoners—hostages they greatly needed—and were also unable to take guns or ammunition from their nearly defeated foes. The strategic consequences were severe. Crozier marched back to Fort Carlton and warned his superiors about what was going on. Fort Carlton's garrison and supplies were evacuated, and the fort set ablaze. The Métis were unable to seize the fort or—more importantly—the supplies stored there. And they lost the element of strategic surprise.

Dumont wanted to ambush the wagon train full of supplies as it left Fort Carlton. "We could have killed a lot of them," Dumont himself later recounted. "But Riel, who kept us constantly on the leash, was formally opposed to the project." Woodcock observes: "[A]ttacked at night in country unfamiliar to most of them, very few of [the NWMP] party would have survived to join in the defense of Prince Albert."[342] He adds: "Once again, Riel's restraint and his lingering dreams of a treaty without further bloodshed, gave respite to the enemy, and Dumont, who realized that strategic as well as tactical advantages were being given away, raged inwardly even as he did his best to calm the restlessness of his young captains and their men."[343]



Encouraged by the victory at Duck Lake, nearby Cree began attacks of their own. In late winter and struggling with the destruction of buffalo herds, many Cree were hungry. On March 30, a raiding party descended on the town of Battleford. The settlers evacuated and the Cree took the food and supplies they needed. There was relatively little violence, though a government Indian agent was shot and killed in a dispute.

A few days later, on April 2, another Cree raiding party under the leadership of Wandering Spirit attacked the village of Frog Lake, seizing supplies and prisoners. The raiders then tried to move their prisoners to another location, but the village Indian agent—who had a particularly bad reputation for his treatment of Indigenous people—refused. Wandering Spirit shot the Indian agent, and some of the raiders opened fire on other male prisoners, especially clergy. Cree leader Big Bear tried to stop this attack, but was not successful in time; nine settlers were killed.[344] The deaths of civilian prisoners would provoke a strong reaction from the government and undermine the hopes that Big Bear and other leaders had for later negotiation.

Battleford and Frog Lake were easy targets for the Cree, but on April 15 they escalated and sent a force of two hundred fighters to attack Fort Pitt. Big Bear led this attack himself, wanting to avoid unnecessary violence while building a strong Indigenous confederacy. The Cree warriors easily surrounded Fort Pitt. The commander of the garrison was Francis Dickens (son of novelist Charles Dickens); Dickens surrendered to the Cree. Big

Bear took a number of townspeople prisoner, released Dickens and his men, and then burned the fort down.

As the Cree were undertaking their successful attacks, the Métis were preparing for the arrival of Canadian reinforcements. When a provisional government had been declared by Louis Riel at the Red River Rebellion fifteen years earlier, the government had taken months to send troops. But new railroads had shortened the Canadian response time. In April, a force of nine hundred soldiers was sent to put down the Métis rebellion and destroy the provisional government.

Their arrival could have been delayed or hampered if Dumont had been allowed to attack the railroad tracks. Even after Canadian forces marched north from Qu'Appelle, Dumont's excellent system of scouts and couriers kept him apprised of the column's exact position. Woodcock explains:

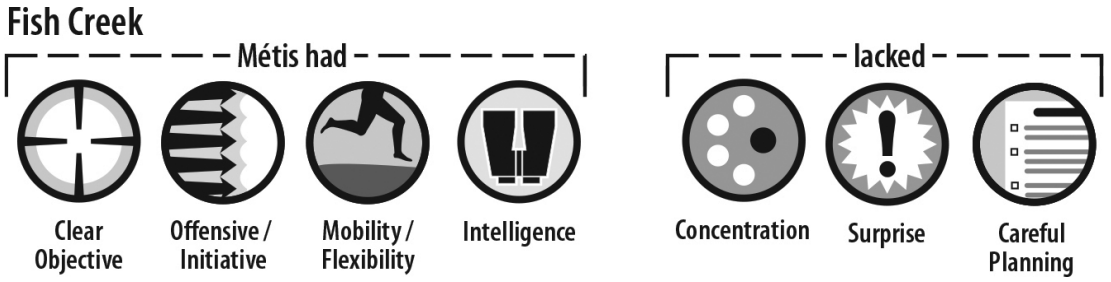
> Dumont and his captains had worked out a strategy of guerilla harassment that would undoubtedly have been as efficient as his information service. He proposed to send his men riding to the southeast so that they could blow up the railway tracks, destroy the bridges and prevent supplies and reinforcements reaching Middleton and his army. He also—as he said—'proposed that we go ahead of the troops, harass them by night, and above all prevent them from sleeping, believing this was a good way to demoralize them and make them lose heart.' Undoubtedly such tactics would have been extremely effective with the kind of green soldiers—the clerks and shopmen of Montreal and Toronto and Winnipeg—who were marching fearfully into the wilderness.[345]

Indeed, records show that Canadian troops were terrified the Métis would undertake exactly those kinds of actions.[346] But Riel again refused, and instead demanded that Métis force be concentrated at the village of

Batoche where, in his visions, he would emerge as a messiah. So the Canadian troops arrived in the area unhampered.

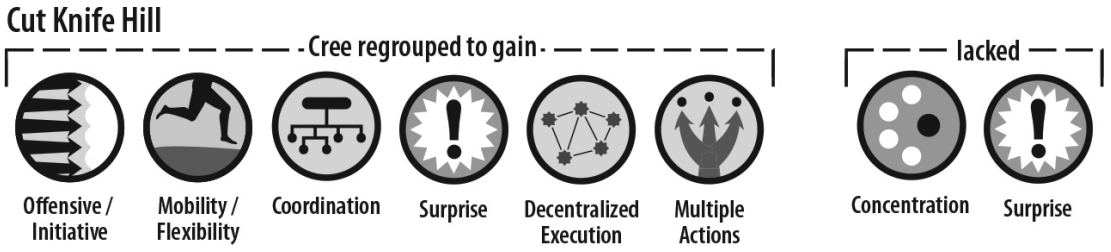
They brought with them a new piece of American military technology: the Gatling gun. A bulky weapon mounted on wheels, the Gatling gun was the first machine gun. It was crude by modern standards but highly dangerous, especially when the Métis lacked adequate arms themselves.

Dumont's extensive network of scouts told him exactly where the Canadian force was marching, and by April 23 they had nearly reached the Métis capital of Batoche. Finally permitted to defend their territory, Dumont hastily prepared an ambush at a ravine on Fish Creek. About two hundred Métis fighters entrenched themselves in protected firing positions to wait for the arrival of the Canadian troops on April 24. Dumont modeled the ambush after buffalo hunts in which herds would be driven into pits and shot en masse.



The battle did not go as planned. In part because there were not yet any leaves on the trees, the Canadians saw suspicious signs as they approached the ambush. Dumont was unable to trap them completely in the ravine. The Métis were hungry and low on ammunition, but their superior firing positions allowed them to sharp-shoot their enemies. Four Métis and two Dakota were killed, but ten Canadian soldiers were killed and forty-five wounded. Dumont's small force was able to drive back the nine-hundred-strong Canadian force, causing them to retreat and delaying their advance on Batoche. The intensity of Dumont's attack fooled the Canadians into

believing they were being fired on by many more fighters than were actually present.



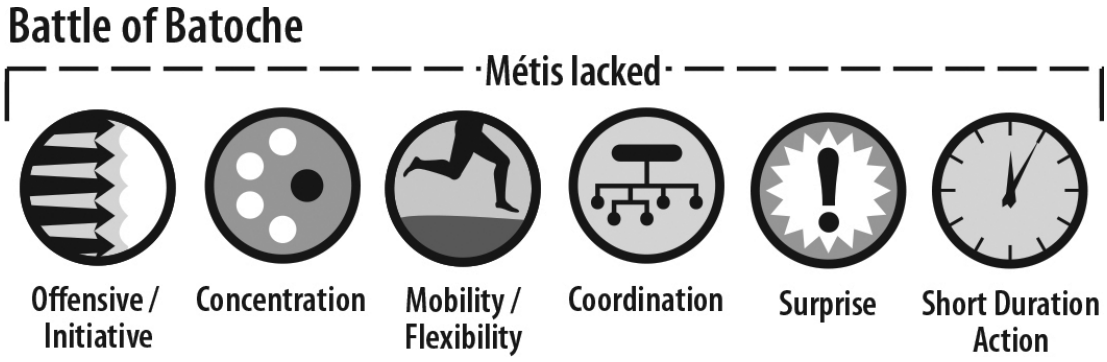
Meanwhile, another column of four hundred Canadian troops was on the way to attack Indigenous people near Battleford. On May 2, they snuck up on a small camp by Cut Knife Hill that held Cree and Assiniboine warriors along with women and children. The Canadians set up their Gatling gun and two pieces of field artillery and opened fire on the camp. Warriors counterattacked immediately to allow the noncombatants in the camp to escape. Cree war chief Fine Day then coordinated a brilliant series of tactical maneuvers against the Canadian troops, using flanking maneuvers and surprise attacks from various sides to harry the troops.

The Indigenous side had only fifty combatants to use against four hundred Canadian soldiers. But despite being surprised, outnumbered, and outgunned, the Cree and Assiniboine had superior courage, knowledge of the terrain, and tactical ability. The Indigenous troops moved so quickly and quietly from position to position that the Canadian commander believed he was facing six hundred warriors. They fought for six hours—with an 8:1 combatant ratio in the settlers' favor—before the Canadians fled. Only the intervention of Cree political chief Poundmaker stopped the Cree and Assiniboine fighters from riding after the Canadian troops and obliterating them as they retreated.[347]

Fine Day's incredible success at Cut Knife Hill was the most dramatic rebel victory to date. It was also their last decisive victory against Canadian forces. Dumont had delayed the advance of Canadian troops near Batoche,

but had not stopped them. Métis and Cree forces had showed their tactical superiority over Canadian forces again and again. It was *strategy* that was the problem.

Guerrilla strategy is based on mobility, concealment, and surprise. Logistically, it requires frequent small raids on the occupier to gather arms and supplies. But Riel forced the Métis to give up those advantages by sitting in Batoche and waiting for an inevitable attack at the enemy's leisure. A lack of logistical raids meant that Métis fighters in Batoche were almost completely out of ammunition and spent the days prior to the Canadian attack melting down whatever lead they could find into improvised bullets. (By the end of the battle, they would be firing pebbles and bits of scrap metal from their guns.)



Canadian troops approached Batoche by both land and water. Some were carried on the steamboat *Northcote*, a troop transport on the South Saskatchewan River. On May 8, Dumont's fighters ambushed the boat as it neared Batoche. Dumont's people fired on the deck so that the helmsman dove for cover and left the boat unsteered. They then pulled a cable tight across the river, which snapped off the boat's smokestacks, putting it out of the battle. The Métis harassed the boat with occasional fire for several days as it drifted downriver, preventing repairs.[348]

But the majority of the Canadian force arrived by land and surrounded Batoche on May 9. The details of the defeat are too predictable to recount

here. Suffice it to say that Canadian forces laid siege to the town for a week until the Métis had nothing left to fight with. Dumont and a handful of other fighters escaped. The town formally surrendered on May 15. Riel was captured, and later tried and executed.

Reportedly a number of Indigenous warriors were on the way to Batoche to join the fight, but turned back when they heard the town had surrendered. Woodcock writes: “These reports—if they have any basis in fact—suggest that if Dumont had taken decisive action in defiance of Riel immediately after the battle of Duck Lake, support would have come to him, and come in time to have some effect on events.”[349]

The fight wasn’t entirely over for the Cree. Once the militia arrived and secured Batoche, another force continued west along the river to deal with Poundmaker and Big Bear. With several thousand well-armed Canadian troops and police controlling the river (and their supply lines back to the railway unharassed), the Canadians were able to pursue the Cree fighters. Big Bear and the Cree defeated a detachment of NWMP at Frenchman’s Butte on May 28. But they were almost out of ammunition when confronted by another NWMP force on June 3 near Loon Lake, so they released the hostages they had previously taken, and retreated. Big Bear was captured a month later, and imprisoned.

It’s entirely possible that the conflict could have turned out very differently if a few people had made different decisions. Imagine if Riel had bowed to Dumont’s experience and allowed him to execute his original plan. Or if Dumont and the other Métis had brought Riel in as an adviser rather than a primary decision-maker. Or if Dumont and other militant elements had simply defied Riel, or asked Riel to step down and return to his family. As Woodcock argues, Fort Carlton and Prince Albert could have been taken easily with surprise attacks, and Battleford shortly after. English-speaking Métis would have joined the fight.[350]

Even later, there was still some hope if Dumont had sent fighters southwest to destroy railway and telegraph lines. Woodcock argues: “If there had been two or three successful derailments of trains with troops or goods destined for Qu’Appelle, and two or three ambushes that had shown the weakness of Middleton’s tactics and captured some of his weapons and supplies, it is unlikely that the restive [Cree] Chief Piapot would have remained inactive” which would have brought in the remaining Cree, and then Métis, Sioux, and those Assiniboine in the region who hadn’t yet joined, and perhaps the Blackfoot Confederacy.[351]

Woodcock observes: “Middleton’s army would have been entirely inadequate—in numbers and training alike—even to contain such a movement. [Prime Minister John A.] Macdonald would have been forced either to negotiate seriously or to face years of guerilla warfare for which the new Dominion was ill-equipped; the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway would have been delayed indefinitely.”[352] The history of what is now Western Canada could have turned out very differently.

Ideally, every action taken in a campaign will advance the overall strategy. It will build the capacity of the movement, or weaken those in power, or make tangible progress on the ultimate goal. The North-West Rebellion failed—even though the rebels won almost every engagement—because they lost strategic ground throughout the conflict as they slowly conceded their advantages.

Dumont and the Métis knew from experience and strategic insight what was needed. Their obstacle wasn’t thinking about strategy, but *implementing* it. Bringing together all of the pieces needed to implement a successful strategy is perhaps the biggest challenge of any resistance movement. But that’s the subject I turn to in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 12

Campaigns & Strategy

"A good plan today is better than a perfect plan tomorrow."
—George Patton

"Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."
—Sun Tzu

SITE 41

Southern Ontario, 1979. Municipalities over the Alliston aquifer—one of the cleanest water sources in the world—begin searching for a new landfill site to match their growing garbage production.[353] And they unwittingly set into motion a struggle to protect the land that will last a quarter-century and bring together Indigenous and settler communities. It's a fight that will use a spectrum of tactics from lobbying and awareness raising to mass protest and direct action.

The main garbage dump in the area, the Pauze landfill, is judged too small to cope with future waste disposal. But in the early 1980s, it's

revealed that toxic plumes of leachate have entered the groundwater near the Pauze landfill. The plumes caused by the landfill are worsened by illegal dumping of toxic industrial waste into the dump. The provincial government refuses to pump out the contaminated groundwater and treat it, so a new system is built to pipe water in to (formerly well-using) residents.[354] These events cause growing worry about the groundwater among Indigenous people and settlers. Pauze landfill is closed, which puts more pressure on the existing garbage disposal infrastructure.

This pressure, combined with a general disregard for the land, accelerates the hasty landfill site search. In 1986, a location called Site 41—a farm in Tiny Township over the Alliston aquifer—is selected. What follows is two decades of back-and-forth between concerned citizens and a group of arrogant bureaucrats and "experts."

In brief: Citizens argue that the landfill planning process is poor, even by the low standards of such bodies. A special joint board is created to investigate and in 1990 the Ministry of Environment commissions a report to see why things had gone so wrong. The joint board rejects the site selection process as "irredeemably deficient." But, as often happens when the grassroots achieve some leverage, a higher level of government intervenes: the Premier of Ontario overrides the joint board decision and puts the process back on its original trajectory.

The resumed process prioritizes *technical* selection criteria. Engineers and similar "experts" are to be heard from. Community groups, farmers, and Indigenous people are not considered "qualified witnesses" and are excluded. Eleven more potential landfill sites are examined, but—surprise, surprise—Site 41 is selected again.

A community group (WYE Citizens) requests funding from the environmental assessment board to intervene. They are granted funding only for a *technical* expert. They are explicitly told not to discuss social, community, or agricultural impacts. Tiny Township itself files a legal

challenge which is rejected. WYE Citizens presents alternate plans for conservation, recycling, and other options. They are rejected.

Concerned citizens keep trying to fight the landfill on technical grounds, but even when they successfully point out serious technical flaws, the government simply overrules them.[355] A study of the groundwater quality around the proposed landfill site finds that it is extraordinarily free of contamination. Activists argue that the area deserves special protection.

But they are hemmed in by government high-handedness, and limited by technical arguments that ignore human and ecological impacts. Community prospects for victory look increasingly dim. In 2008, construction begins. Fences, roads, and other infrastructure are built on the site. Final permits are approved.

Activists from many different backgrounds decide it's time to escalate. In November 2008, a group of activists including a Mohawk elder walk from Site 41 to Queen's Park (Ontario's provincial seat of government). They travel 150 kilometers and arrive with three hundred marchers. Activists enlist large progressive groups including the Council of Canadians, The Sierra Club, and the Green Party. The Métis Nation of Ontario joins in. These larger organizations help raise the profile of the campaign and get more people involved provincially and nationally.

But the key to success is local direct action. In May 2009, five women from Beausoleil First Nation (Anishinabe Kweag) build a protest camp opposite Site 41. "As Anishinabe women it's our duty to protect the water," one of them explains.[356] The camp becomes a rallying point for both Indigenous and settler activists in the campaign. And in June, activists escalate even further; they take over and blockade the entrance of the site, preventing construction equipment or personnel from entering. The blockaders include farmers, community members, and Indigenous people.

The protest camp remains in place for 137 days. In July of 2009, the county government gets an injunction against the protesters. Police raid the

camp and arrest blockaders. Seventeen participants—up to eighty-two years of age—are charged with mischief and "intimidation."[357] But the movement against Site 41 is strong and diverse and has already won popular support in the area. So three days after the police raid, there is a massive rally at which 2,500 people demand a construction moratorium.

The combination of direct action and popular mobilization works. The county government quickly backs down and votes for a one-year moratorium. A month later the county makes their decision permanent, and the Ministry of the Environment revokes the permits. Site 41 is rezoned as agricultural land officially and banned from being used for a landfill in the future. Charges against activists are dropped.

The land—and the aquifer under it—is saved.

■ ■ ■

Resistance movements have goals; their strategy is how they reach those goals. Strategy is how you piece together a series of actions to build capacity to make incremental progress. Resistance strategists intelligently apply their limited resources to work toward their goals. And they constantly adjust their approach to meet changes in circumstances and to outwit their opposition.

The Site 41 struggle is a good example of this. For a long time, those in power set the timetable and the rules of the conflict. Resisters were able to win when *they* seized the initiative, by escalating, and by building on the campaign they had waged up to that point.

A movement's ultimate goal is often ambitious and may take a generation or more to accomplish. Ending apartheid, abolishing slavery, and winning the eight-hour workday were enormous goals, and organizers moved toward them using series of overlapping shorter campaigns with smaller concrete goals. These intermediate campaigns toward a grand goal

help build a movement's momentum, cultivate a sense of confidence and accomplishment among members, and develop the basic capacities and strategic abilities a movement needs to take on bigger goals.

Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty was a good example of a movement with a clear long-term objective and concrete, attainable medium-term goals which escalated over time. As *Rolling Thunder* explains: "The fact that there were specific animals suffering, whose lives could be saved by specific direct action, made the issues concrete and lent the campaign a sense of urgency that translated into a willingness on the part of participants to push themselves out of their comfort zones. Likewise, at every juncture in the SHAC campaign, there were intermediate goals that could easily be accomplished, so the monumental task of undermining an entire corporation never felt overwhelming."

Dividing long-term grand strategies into shorter campaigns has other benefits. Campaigns allow movements to gather allies with similar medium-term goals while developing movement capacity and skills. The finite nature of a campaign means that organizers can look back at the end of a campaign, evaluate their successes, and improve their strategic understanding for next time.

In this chapter I will mostly write about strategy in campaigns lasting months or years. Any movement with the strategic capacity to be effective over years can apply the same skills and insights to lifelong revolutionary projects.

I wish that I could sit down and give you a master plan for perfect strategy, a blueprint distilled from movements of the past. Unfortunately, there is no universal blueprint; context is everything.

That said, there are patterns of success and failure. There are strategic and tactical principles, like those I discussed in the preceding chapter. And there are rough templates; general approaches and trajectories that many movements have used with good success.

Whatever the particular strategy in use, effective movements have a few things in common. They need processes for *devising and evaluating strategy.* And successful movements don't just stumble onto good strategy. They develop *strategic capacity*: an organizational ability to develop strategy. Organizations in effective movements also find ways to multiply their political force by working with others in *alliances or coalitions* (formally or informally). And they use an escalating *strategic trajectory* that builds on their victories.

And they pull together all the different capacities, discussed in previous chapters, that are needed for effective campaigns.

ANATOMY OF A CAMPAIGN

Successful movements bring into play all the elements I've been writing about. You've probably noticed that many of the capacities I've written about have their own repeating cycles: the intelligence cycle, logistics cycle, and the tactical cycle of planning an action, carrying it out, and evaluating it. I think of these cycles together, spiraling through time, twisting together like a strong rope. (See figure 12-1)

At the core is action, since it is action that distinguishes a resistance group from a collection of dissidents. Wrapped around that core are all of the supporting capacities that protect, strengthen, and sustain a campaign. Direct action is an essential part of resistance, but without support from people working on communications, intelligence, recruitment, and all the rest, direct action rarely accomplishes much. Those capacities are force multipliers.

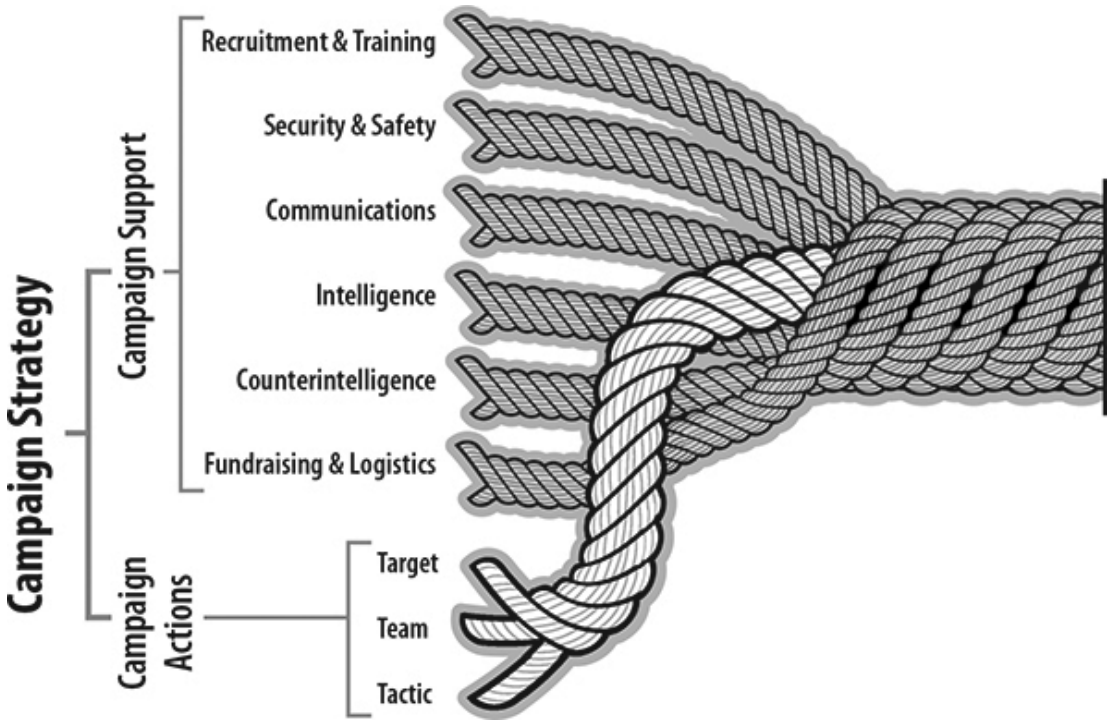


Figure 12-1: Campaign Strategy

And indeed, the supporting strands contribute directly to action: intelligence capacity identifies the target while recruitment and training provide the team. A campaign's overall strategy and organization determine the way that the different parts twine together, the timing of actions, and so on.

Each of these elements is important and necessary. Let me borrow an analogy from the farm. In botany, it's known that all plants need certain minerals—magnesium, potassium, calcium, and so on—to survive and thrive. These needs are often illustrated using the metaphor of a barrel (see Figure 12-2: Law of the Minimum) with each of the staves representing a mineral. If there is a shortage of one mineral, the barrel's contents will pour out; its total capacity is reduced. The element in shortest supply limits the health and yield of the plant.

Resistance organizing is much the same. You can have the best and most carefully organized event in the world, but if you don't have

communication and outreach to get people to attend it, the event will accomplish nothing. You can have the best communication and outreach in the world, but if you don't have direct action to back it up, your campaign will lack the teeth needed to change entrenched systems of power. Or you can have the most militant and dedicated actionists imaginable, but lack the recruitment capacity or the security and counterintelligence to keep that force strong in the face of arrests and repression. You really do need all these capacities to be effective.

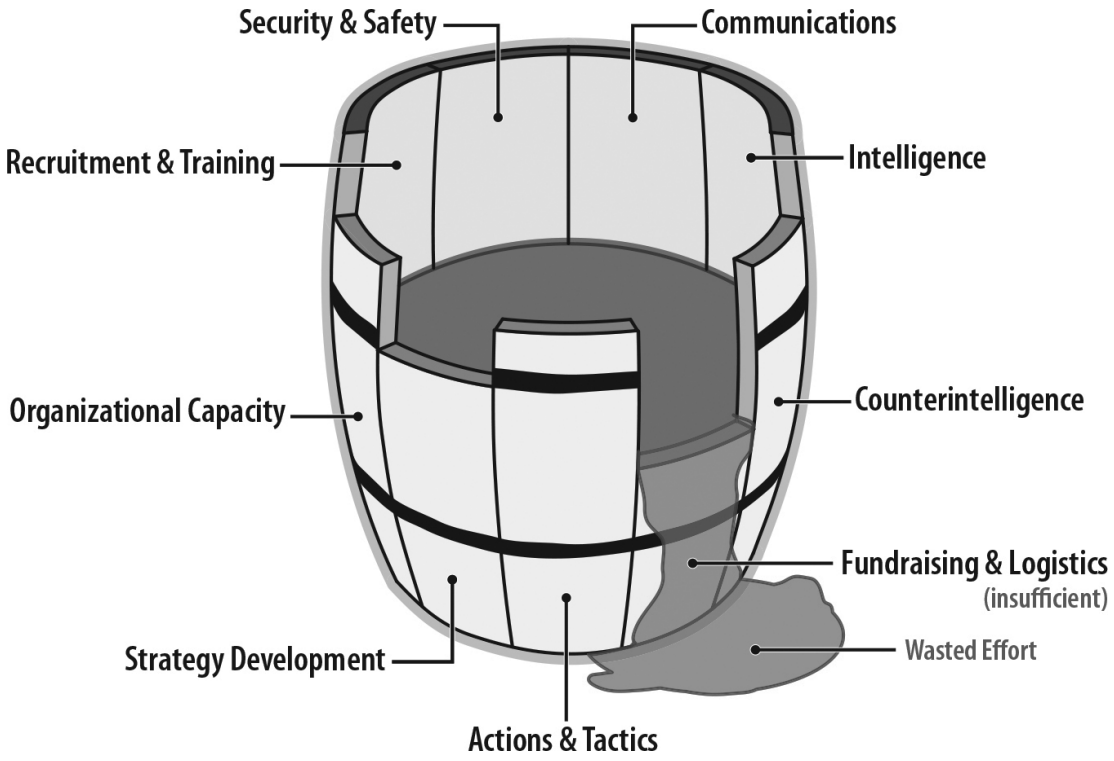


Figure 12-2: Law of the Minimum

Of course, different campaigns and different strategies require these capacities in different *amounts* (which, to extend the metaphor, would suggest a barrel with staves of differing widths). Some may emphasize mass mobilization, others secrecy and tactical surprise. But any major weakness in one area will be exploited by those in power.

STRATEGIC TRAJECTORIES

Some years ago I was at a tree-sit camp with several comrades. It was a chilly January morning, partway up a mountainside in (occupied) British Columbia. One of my friends was trying to start a fire in our open hearth, little circle of stones under a big blue tarp. She was newly arrived, and I suppose she hadn't started many campfires in the past. She started by laying out several big logs, and then some smaller sticks on top of that, and then some crumpled pieces of newspaper on the sticks. Then she lit the paper.

The stack blazed brightly for a few moments as the paper burned, and bits of ember drifted down into the wood below. But the wood didn't catch. The flames dwindled. Stymied, she crumpled up a few more pages of newspaper and threw them on top. The fire leapt up again for a moment and consumed the new fuel, and then again faltered. She kept throwing new paper on top until another friend politely pointed out that the paper had to go *under* the kindling. That the little flame had to burn larger and larger pieces of fuel to turn into the fire we needed to cook our breakfast. It had to escalate. Otherwise, we were just wasting our resources in flashy—but ultimately inconsequential—flares of light and heat.

■ ■ ■

At its core, every strategy contains a trajectory. A path that moves us from our current situation to the goal we want to reach. Every successful movement passes along such a trajectory, whether it plans to or not. (Indeed, the trajectory *taken* is rarely the one initially planned for.)

Strategy is an iterative process. We try something. It does what we hoped, or it doesn't. We learn from our successes and our failures, and we adapt. But struggles for justice are not one-sided. Our opposition is learning as well. Those in power have, in some cases, a longer continuous history of

repression than our movements have of resistance. The loss of cultures of resistance has meant that those in power often have more expertise at putting down revolt than we have at rebellion. (And they understand this, whereas new generations of resisters—especially youth movements emerging from relative privilege—sometimes imagine they have invented everything from scratch.)

Resistance movements—whatever their plans—almost invariably suffer a series of false starts, badly paced escalations, or misplaced efforts in their early days. Even if they plan their efforts perfectly, they often experience difficult phases of growth and maturation.

Strategists and theorists of many stripes have developed their own theories about how resistance movements grow and develop. British counterinsurgency expert Frank Kitson argued that movements go through three phases: the preparatory phase, the nonviolent phase, and the violent/insurgency phase. The preparatory phase, he argued, is when movements are just putting their organization and political consciousness in place, and when movements are most vulnerable to information gathering (because they lack security culture). He argued that occupational powers must surveil and infiltrate movements early on to gather information that will be useful later in undermining the movement.

The basic pattern of escalation that Kitson observes is common in history. Many of the movements I have mentioned—such as the African National Congress or the Irish independence movement—followed a roughly similar approach. Early preparation is essential, because resisters rarely start out with strong organization or a shared culture of resistance. Early action may emphasize nonviolence because it is perceived to be of lower risk, or because there is a lower barrier to entry, or because movements want to secure what they see as the moral high ground, or for many other reasons.

In any case, Kitson's nonviolent phase has two main outcomes. It allows movements to involve larger numbers of people and strong organizations. And it allows movements to publicly use—and publicly exhaust—conventional methods of protest. Once those conventional methods have failed, the resisters have a moral "mandate" to escalate to more serious action and, ideally, they have the organizational and support base they *need* to escalate successfully.

Kitson's three-phase structure is helpful but not universal. Plenty of resistance movements have lacked a distinct nonviolent phase. (And historically successful "nonviolent" movements typically used diverse tactics anyway.) You might argue that some movements against Nazi occupation, for example, had a nonviolent stage during which they emphasized sabotage or escape and evasion. But that was due to lack of arms, training, and organization more than moral adherence to nonviolence.

The key thing I take from Kitson's structure is the idea of *escalation*. Movements ratchet up their tactics in ways that allow them to lay the groundwork for later action. And they choose actions that build the strength, legitimacy, or appeal of their movement.

Often this escalation takes place by moving from low-risk to higher-risk tactics. Organizers sweep across the taxonomy of action (Volume One, p. 99) from lobbying and protest, through movement capacity building on to confrontational forms of action.

Of course, especially in long-term movements, there are defeats and reversals. On one side, a movement escalates its resistance; on the other side, those in power escalate their repression. Escalation is rarely linear or continuous.

Communist leader Mao Zedong codified a model which was used in many struggles, including the Chinese Communist Revolution, and which influenced the strategy of revolutionary movements from the war in Vietnam through to the current-day Naxalite revolutionaries in India.

In this theory—the People's War—the first phase is a *defensive phase of survival and organization*. Revolutionaries build up their groups, recruit and train new cadres, propagandize, and prepare for escalation. The second phase is one of *strategic equilibrium and guerrilla warfare*, in which revolutionaries sabotage and harass the armies of those in power, while securing their own organizations and building parallel institutions. And in the third phase, the *strategic offensive*, revolutionaries shift to conventional military formations to overwhelm and decisively defeat the weakened enemy forces. The historical success of this approach lies in its flexibility; if revolutionaries encounter serious repression or losses, they can always fall back to a previous phase, maintaining their survival and movement networks. They continue their work and wait for opportunities to move forward and escalate.

One of the concepts I take away from this strategic model is the importance of *stacking* capacity rather than just shifting emphasis. Of building on the core capacities of a movement. Virtually any group, in the beginning, needs to recruit and train members, clarify its strategy and goals, build organization, and propagandize. Later it may proceed to larger and more serious action, supported by better intelligence and logistical capacity. The most prominent or visible activities may change, but the basic organizational capacity-building never goes away if the movement is to have any chance of long-term success.

Militant radicals are too often uninterested in these trajectories. They want instantaneous and total political transformation, unsullied by messy intermediate steps. This fiery, "no compromise" drive is part of what pushes movements forward and gives movements the benefit of radical flanking. It's an attitude I often share. But it's a simple fact of history that successful movements move along escalating trajectories that take time.

Militants who have rushed into armed action without a broader movement support base have rarely been successful. Certainly there are

times—such as in the Nazi concentration camps—when building such a base was impossible. And certainly that base doesn't have to be a majority for a movement to succeed. But revolutionary theories that prioritize armed struggle at the expense of building support and capacity have a poor track record.

Consider the *foco* theory articulated by Régis Debray in the 1960s. Drawing on Ché Guevara and the success of the Cuban revolution, the *foco* theory called for armed groups of revolutionaries who would inspire popular support by their very existence. This idea seemed plausible to Debray and others because of the improbable success of the Cuban revolutionaries, so small in numbers and yet ultimately victorious. One historian observes that "Castro never built up his force beyond about 300 men, yet he was able to overcome a Cuban army of 30,000 troops and to overthrow Batista in January 1959. In fact, Castro's victory was entirely fortuitous, for Batista's regime had been hopelessly corrupt, unpopular, and inefficient."[358]

When the *foco* theory was put into practice in Bolivia by Guevara, Debray, and a small guerrilla band, the viability of that strategic trajectory became clear. Without civilian support, without a strong culture of resistance in the target region of Bolivia, and with serious language barriers between civilians and guerrillas, what else could have happened? The result was a lot of dead guerrillas in the jungle—Ché Guevara included—without much to show for it. Other Latin American groups following the *foco* theory encountered similar difficulties.[359] (You might note that the *foco* theory is nearly the opposite of the approach successfully used by Amílcar Cabral and the PAIGC, as discussed in chapter 4.)

Building a solid culture of resistance is almost always more important than armed might. As Jeff Goodwin points out, historical revolutions rarely win by driving out the dominant force with a superior army.

> In the Third World, revolutionary change has been possible when colonial or neo-colonial powers at last grew weary of the high costs of empire, although this typically did not occur until after long and bloody wars of counterinsurgency aroused opposition among the metropolitan power's domestic populations. . . . In Eastern Europe, similarly, a revolutionary breakthrough at last became possible when the Soviet Union grew weary of the high costs of its empire. Neither Soviet forces in Eastern Europe nor (neo)colonial troops in the Third World were *militarily* expelled; the decision to withdraw them came, rather, after the progressive attrition of their governments' political will to deploy them in the face of continuing, yet by no means overwhelming, nationalist resistance.[360]

Most of any social movement's power is *implied*. Those in power fear that action will become more militant and—most importantly—that militant and disruptive action will bring in greater numbers of people. Anarchist Michael Albert wrote in *The Trajectory of Change* that from the perspective of those in power, any movement "that appears to have reached a plateau, regardless of how high that plateau may be, has no forward trajectory and is therefore manageable."[361] Isolated militants are defeated militants.

Sometimes I think of a strategic trajectory in terms of *nodes of power.* Any field of conflict has nodes where power is concentrated, and which will aid the side that controls or influences those nodes. For a military general in the Pacific in World War II, those nodes would include little islands to use for staging and as airbases. In the North-West Rebellion, storehouses and forts were nodes of power. Nodes could include anything that, when captured or influenced, would strengthen the side that held them and weaken the side that lost them.

Though resistance movements can gain great leverage through disrupting such infrastructure, they rarely have the military power to hold

physical nodes like buildings in an all-out conflict. Rather, they succeed by influencing more intangible sources of power—social and political nodes—from community groups and neighborhoods to large social institutions, political parties, or unions: winning over allies or sympathizers.

Strategist Marshall Ganz writes: "Strategy is how we turn what we have into what we need to get what we want. It is how we transform our resources into the power to achieve our purposes."[362] Most resistance movements start off with very few resources. They have a few committed people and the possibility of getting more. Just as a successful fire starts with small pieces of kindling and gets bigger, successful movements identify the small nodes of power they can influence and use those to get more power. (People who play strategy games will understand this idea.)

One of the main weaknesses of privileged radical groups is that they may be reluctant to do this. They are often too insular and loath to interact with people who are different from them. (And so they fall prey to the law of involution or a culture of defeat.) But successful movements don't have the luxury to be so picky if they want change on a revolutionary scale.

I interviewed Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, an activist and historian who has spent decades working with groups from the SDS to the ANC to the Sandinistas, and we spoke about the Green Corn Rebellion (which I wrote about in chapter 3). She said: "I compare it to the Zapatistas, and wonder why activists don't look at [the Green Corn Rebellion] as this amazing thing." Why don't activists use that rebellion as an example? Because, Dunbar-Ortiz argues, some activists look at the rural people of that rebellion and see "a bunch of hicks."

But, she explains, you could look at the Zapatistas and see the same thing. "That's the point, they're the people! But because they're sort of exotic, and not American, [activists] can idealize them and think 'nothing like that can happen here.' So they work in solidarity with that rather than imitating it, making it happen here." What many activists don't realize

about Zapatista areas, she adds, is that “about half the communities are Pentecostal Holiness converts, evangelicals. Others are devout Catholics. . . . Here we say ‘oh, those people are so ignorant. I would never work with them.’”

Dunbar-Ortiz explains that movements like the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Black Panther Party learned an important lesson: “Loving the people. Just making the decision you’re going to love the people. Whatever their flaws are . . . Accepting them, rather than trying to correct them and having them become perfect little specimens before you even deal with them. I think [in] any revolution that’s exactly what’s done.”

Loving the people may be further than many radicals are willing to go at the moment. But effective organizers understand the necessity of sometimes working with people who are different from us, and the strength that comes from finding common goals that many groups can work toward. American temperance movements offer us some examples of that.

AMERICAN TEMPERANCE MOVEMENTS

The complicated dynamic between radicals and liberals, and between militants and moderates, can probably be seen in every social movement in history. The temperance movements of the late 1800s and early 1900s offer some examples.

To some, it may seem strange to take lessons for resistance movement strategy from prohibitionists. After all, you might argue, many of the American prohibitionists lobbied for new legislation restricting personal freedoms. And leftist cultures currently tend toward the decriminalization of drugs; to ban alcohol smacks of overbearing moralism or authoritarianism.

But there is a lot to be learned from their struggle. For one, modern social justice activists have more in common with the prohibitionists than might be apparent on the surface. During the Progressive Era (the 1890s to 1920s), there was a heavy overlap between prohibitionists and women's suffragists. Indeed, brewery magnates funded anti-suffrage groups and claimed credit for "defeating" the women's suffrage movement in its early days.

A strong current of feminism energized many temperance activists. Feminists in the temperance movement saw alcohol and alcoholism as being tied to domestic violence, crime, and poverty. And they saw temperance as a way of fighting both moral and political corruption.

Movement Dynamics

The prohibitionist movement of the Progressive Era had its own spectrum of liberals and radicals. The radical "drys" sought a complete ban on alcohol of all kinds. The moderate "damp" activists wanted restrictions on alcohol sales, not complete elimination. Moderates focused mostly on local initiatives. The radicals, on the other hand, were impatient with such piecemeal efforts and pursued change on a larger, national scale.[363]

These two branches did not always get along—they were at times held back by vitriolic horizontal hostility. The radical drys would frequently condemn and verbally attack the moderate damps. A newspaper at the time wrote they "were in some cases roundly denounced as bad or worse than rumsellers—as in league with hell. The resources of the English language were exhausted in holding [the damps] up as criminals of the deepest dye."[364] This "apparent vindictiveness" alienated many sympathizers.

Ann-Marie Szymanski studied the interaction between different temperance movement organizations, and argues that the iron law of

involution (discussed in chapter 2) played a role. She notes that “the leading prohibitionists of the 1880s were indeed more ideologically pure than their counterparts in the [later] Progressive Era, and that purity helped ensure their defeat.”[365]

But involution is not inevitable; movements can choose to reach out, be inclusive, and build alliances. After the prohibition efforts of the 1880s failed, the next generation of feminists learned and adapted. After the turn of the century, Szymanski explains, their new “ideology downplayed the exclusive nativist and racist positions of some suffragists, and instead built support for suffrage by promoting the vote as crucial to securing woman’s full opportunities to pursue happiness. In the end, such feminism appealed to a variety of groups—from trade unionists to settlement workers—because each group believed that its own particular causes would be promoted by suffrage.”[366]

Inclusive movements have real strategic advantages, and a moderate approach is one way to be more inclusive. Szymanski notes that “the moderate drys’ willingness to lower the ideological barriers to movement participation meant that they could mobilize new adherents to the dry cause who might otherwise have remained uninvolved. In contrast, the radical prohibitionists energized a core group of supporters but failed to win over many potential drys.” Moderate parts of the movement, she argues, made a conscious choice to “turn outward” and appeal to damp sympathizers, evading the iron law of involution.[367]

Local Gradualism

In the years following the Civil War (after 1865), prohibitionists were ambitious, but not very successful. Radical drys wanted anti-liquor laws established at the state and national levels, immediately. But their statewide

referenda were mostly defeated.[368] And so they adopted a new strategy: local gradualism. As Szymanski explains, “the anti-liquor movement’s adoption of ‘local gradualism’ could be viewed as an act of self-preservation which allowed dry organizations to regroup after the largely disastrous 1880s.”[369]

Local gradualism relied on the ability of local governments to issue liquor licenses and pass bylaws. Activists used a variety of mostly low-risk tactics including petitions and lobbying, protests and rallies, political endorsements, and litigation. Low-risk tactics like petitions were both means of engaging sympathizers and methods of “testing the water” to see which areas were most promising for action. If temperance activists were successful in many localities in one region, they could escalate to lobbying or referenda at the state level. And then, assuming success, to the federal level.

This strategy was an intelligent use of the comparatively decentralized structure of political power in the United States at the time. Prohibitionists would succeed in passing national legislation in the United States, but failed in the United Kingdom. This, according to J. Christopher Soper, was in part because of differences in government structure. He argues that “the weakness of the American national state and the absence of a coherent alcohol policy opened up myriad opportunities for meaningful local activism,” while “the relative strength of the British state meant that local regions had very little political autonomy which, in turn, discouraged local activism.”[370] Temperance activists in the United States had many attainable nodes of power to seize for political leverage, a benefit their British counterparts lacked.

Though they mostly emphasized protest and legislation, the temperance movement did—like most movements that achieve any degree of success—employ a diversity of tactics. Suffragist Frances Willard used the slogan “Do Everything,” encouraging feminist activists to employ many different

tactics on many fronts to advance the status of women. Direct action was used by militant people and groups in the American temperance movement, including the Women's Temperance Crusade and the Citizens' Law and Order League. These direct actionists would monitor saloons for liquor law violations. And if they saw violations—or if they simply wanted to shut down something they saw as evil—they would take action. Their tactics included both nonviolent occupations (such as taking over saloons to hold prayer meetings) and damaging or destroying property.[371]

Perhaps the most famous anti-liquor vigilante was Carrie Nation. She began, as most people do, on the less risky end of the tactical spectrum. She held protests at bars, singing hymns, and occasionally escalated to barbed insults directed at bartenders. This approach was not as effective as she had hoped. After a "heavenly vision" she escalated to smashing stockpiles of alcohol bottles with rocks.

Her (soon-to-be-ex-) husband jokingly remarked that she could do more damage with a hatchet. "That is the most sensible thing you have said since I married you," she replied, and subsequently divorced him.[372] From then on, she attacked bars and saloons using hatchets. She was arrested thirty times for her "hatchetations," mostly in Kansas which had passed statewide prohibition but enforced it poorly. She was fined and reprimanded, but paid her fines through speaking fees and by selling souvenir hatchets.

Not everyone agreed with local gradualism. Many radicals saw the local approach as a waste of time, as a diversion. And so, Szymanski, explains "the radical prohibitionists adopted an abolitionist strategy, viewing total prohibition as the only appropriate solution to the liquor problem."[373] In the 1890s, the older and well-established national prohibition groups like the Prohibition Party and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) refused to consider an escalating strategy of local stepping-stones. "Rigid in their radicalism, the Prohibition Party and the WCTU failed to innovate, even though a more modest approach might have allowed them to continue

leading the movement."[374] Instead, the relatively new Anti-Saloon League—an "upstart" group—took a leadership position through local gradualism and by recruiting "damp" individuals. Szymanski observes: "By adopting local gradualism instead of pursuing state-based prohibition, the dry movement charted a new course for itself, one which was slow, piecemeal, and extremely labor intensive."[375] But this work dramatically increased the size of the movement base.

The gradualist Anti-Saloon League's "political strategy from the beginning was aimed at developing public support for prohibition." This strategy would mobilize and consolidate the temperance movement, while maximizing the strengths of activists and the weaknesses of their opponents. In their own words—and in language that will resonate with any asymmetric strategist—the Anti-Saloon League "proposed to attack the liquor traffic first at the points of least resistance, namely, the country cross-roads, the townships, the villages, and the rural counties." They didn't just want easy symbolic victories; they were thinking about long-term movement building, and winning over available nodes of power. Again, in their own words, they sought "to use sentiment already in existence, crystallizing it for immediate use while at the same time by that very process creating more sentiment for the larger conflicts ahead."[376]

Szymanski explains: "Intuitively, they knew that 'nothing succeeds like success' and that nothing makes more sentiment than the proper utilization of the sentiment which already exists." Local successes built the organization, momentum, and courage needed to escalate.

Strategic Effectiveness

While controversial for radical drys, the gradualist approach was quite effective. During the progressive era, temperance organizations like the

Anti-Saloon League worked their way from the local level up the state level, passing more than half of the referenda they proposed.[377] The ASL leadership would only advance to a state referendum when the local efforts had demonstrated that success on the state level was likely. If not, they chose to battle elsewhere.[378]

As an example of this strategy's mobilization potential, Szymanski compares WCTU membership in two demographically similar states: Pennsylvania and Illinois. WCTU membership in Pennsylvania tripled between 1905 and 1920, while Illinois membership stagnated. The difference? Pennsylvania adopted a strategy of local gradualism and was more moderate in its approach.[379]

Local gradualism could make progress regardless of whether legislative success was achieved or not. As Szymanski explains, "local gradualism involved more than simply acquiring dry territory; it was also a device for educating and radicalizing those who sympathized with the anti-liquor cause."[380] Which is to say, local gradualism helped turn moderates *into* radicals. Moderates would become radicalized as they saw the way the liquor lobby used dirty tricks—like bribery and political corruption—to fight restrictions on alcohol.

As these local struggles demonstrated the intransigence of the liquor lobby to moderates, there was growing potential for moderate-radical alliances. Szymanski explains that "as local efforts proved futile against an entrenched foe, movement leaders found it relatively easy to engage their moderate adherents in more radical state and national campaigns."[381]

Success—and Failure

Objectively, the radical prohibitionists succeeded with the passing of the Eighteenth Amendment, which took effect in 1920 and began the era of

national prohibition. Radical social change was put into law, paradoxically, because of the strength of a moderate approach.

Prohibitionists had extremely high—almost millennialist—expectations about the effect prohibition would have on society. One evangelist presided over a theatrical "funeral" for booze, proclaiming: "The reign of tears is over. The slums will soon be only a memory. We will turn our prisons into factories and our jails into storehouses and corncribs."[382]

On one hand, these aspirations are a reflection of the quasi-utopian beliefs that many radical movements use to motivate themselves. After all, it is worth going to jail—worth dedicating your life to struggle and sacrifice—if by doing so you can usher in a new age for humanity. People won't risk as much if their only reward is a slim possibility of incremental improvement.

On the other hand, the preacher's words show the misconceptions that result from blaming all social problems on individual morality. Prohibitionists like that preacher believed that slums and prisons existed mostly because of the personal moral corruption caused by alcohol, not by systemic social or economic injustices.

Prohibition, of course, ultimately failed. Partly, that failure represented a failure to address the root problems behind issues of prisons and poverty (like capitalism, racism, and so on). More to the point, prohibition was simply unenforceable. Regular people ignored and defied it; ironically, the result of that successful movement was an informal kind of civil disobedience. And—like any attempt at large-scale restriction of human behavior—prohibition had unintended consequences, smuggling and a boost in organized crime among them.

All that said, the temperance movement's use of local gradualism, and the dynamics between different wings of the movement, can teach us a lot. Szymanski argues that the civil rights movement employed a similar strategy. And some current organizations—like the Community

Environmental Legal Defense Fund I discussed in chapter 2—are using a strategy rather like local gradualism, and with considerable success so far.

MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY CHINESE REBELLIONS

We learn from every campaign, and we grow. Sometimes the process of learning and strategic escalation happens over months or years, but sometimes it takes decades or even centuries.

That's a history of resistance we can see in China, and China offers us a great many movements and struggles to learn from. I'm going to focus here on the period of upheaval after the First Opium War (which ended in 1842).

The First Opium War caused enormous suffering and unrest in China. It was triggered by events in the 1700s, when British (and later American) corporations began to demand Chinese products like tea, silk, and porcelain. Chinese markets did not have the same demand for European goods, resulting in a trade deficit that the British tried to balance by selling opium in China.[383] Opium, however, was soon banned in China, with government and moral authorities arguing that opium was a poison that destroyed lives and communities. Western corporations reacted to the ban by smuggling the drug across the border.

In the late 1830s, China's ruling Qing government got fed up, arrested smugglers en masse, and seized their opium. So the British government declared war on China and sent fleets to ravage the coast until China surrendered. China was forced to accept opium imports, to give up Hong Kong, and to pay reparations to the British for the cost of the war and for lost profits. This amounted to twenty-one million silver dollars, plus interest. (Even this enormous amount of silver would soon appear tiny

compared to the amount flowing out of the country to pay for forcibly imported opium.)

China was facing internal troubles aside from opium. Between 1751 and 1851, the population of China had more than doubled, reaching 432 million people. But the amount of arable land under cultivation had increased by only 8 percent.[384] As the population grew, land was subdivided into smaller and smaller plots. At the same time, landlords operating under the traditional power structure continued to hoard wealth and annex land whenever they could. It was becoming almost impossible for a family to subsist on an average-sized plot of land.

By the 1840s, regular people in China were being crushed between the demands of foreign capitalism on one hand and "feudal" landlords on the other.[385] The huge demand for silver on a national level intensified exploitation all the way down the social hierarchy. Unrest grew. In the 1700s there had been secret resistance networks like the White Lotus Society. But those were miniscule compared to the upheaval which was about to begin.

A group of Chinese historians wrote: "Where there is oppression, there is resistance. In the 1840s there were uprisings of peasants and handicraft workers everywhere, and the minority nationalities also rebelled. In the space of 10 years there were well over 100 uprisings, ranging from struggles against the payment of levies, taxes and rents, and the delivery of grain to landlords, to assaults on cities, and the occupation of territory. Most of these uprisings were initiated and organized by the popular, anti-dynastic secret societies."[386]

And indeed, beyond local peasant uprisings and tax revolts, there were a number of large-scale rebellions through the 1850s and 1860s in China. (I've shown these on a simplified map of Qing-era China in figure 12-3.) There was a substantial and long-lasting Muslim rebellion around this time in Yunnan in the south, and another in Shaanxi and Gansu provinces in the

northwest. There was a tribal uprising called the Miao Revolt in Hunan and Guizhou provinces, the third such uprising in 120 years. And tensions between the Hakka and Punti ethnic groups, exacerbated by population density and economic strain in Guangdong province, caused a clan war that killed around a million people over several years.

But I'm going to focus here on two long-lasting uprisings that caused the greatest political challenge to the ruling Qing Dynasty: the simultaneous Taiping and Nien Rebellions.

Origins of Rebellion

The two rebellions had distinct causes and origins. The Taipings were founded by Hung Hsiu-chuan, a Hakka dissident who fused elements of pseudo-Christianity, Taoism, and proto-communism to form a new spiritual ideology and revolutionary movement. Starting in 1851 in southern China with one hundred fighters (as shown on the map), the movement soon became an army of ten thousand marching northeast across China, expropriating wealth from the landlords and taking cities and territory.[387] Three years later, a host of a million people reached the gates of the city of Nanjing and took it. They renamed the city "Tiencheng," meaning "Heavenly Capital."

The Nien Rebellion had a very different beginning. Centered north of the Taipings, the Nien fighters had their roots in rag-tag groups of salt smugglers, bandits, and displaced peasants. Their organization also drew on local militia groups that arose in some parts of China while the central Qing government was weak. Some militia groups—which protected villages from raiders—became big enough to sustain themselves through local taxation.[388] Nien rebels also had connections to surviving remnants of the White Lotus Society.[389]

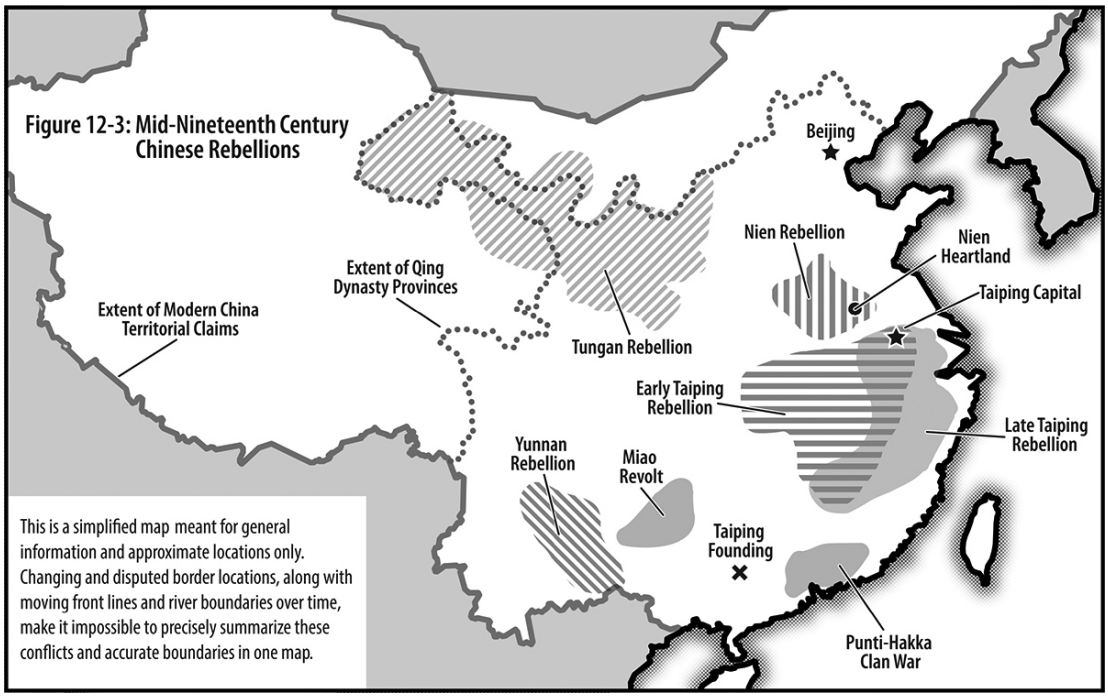


Figure 12-3: Mid-Nineteenth Century Chinese Rebellions
Beijing
Nien Rebellion
Nien Heartland
Taiping Capital
Extent of Qing Dynasty Provinces
Extent of Modern China Territorial Claims
Tungan Rebellion
Early Taiping Rebellion
Late Taiping Rebellion
Yunnan Rebellion
Miao Revolt
Taiping Founding
Punti-Hakka Clan War
This is a simplified map meant for general information and approximate locations only. Changing and disputed border locations, along with moving front lines and river boundaries over time, make it impossible to precisely summarize these conflicts and accurate boundaries in one map.

Between 1851 and 1855 the massive Huang He (Yellow) River flooded on a biblical scale. The river writhed across eastern China, killing thousands of people and destroying thousands of square kilometers of crops. By the time the river settled down, it ran a fundamentally different course, its ocean mouth relocated several hundred kilometers northward. The Qing government, nearly bankrupt from war reparations and busy putting down new rebellions, offered little aid or relief to those affected. Ecological disaster was the last straw after generations of economic misery for the Nien rebels.

The Nien rebels were smaller in number than the Taipings; their fighters numbered perhaps a few tens of thousands at any given time. But they would develop clever tactics, and their experience as smugglers and raiders maximized their impact.

The two rebellions had very different uniting ideologies. The Taiping rebels were bold and ambitious in seeking to abolish traditional social hierarchies and bring about major land reform. They fought for women's rights and gender equality.[390] They also desired spiritual transformation, of

both themselves as individuals and of their country. The Nien, on the other hand, lacked a broader program of clear social justice goals or a single coherent ideology. They were motivated by practical concerns: their people were starving.

The Nien rebels' operational and strategic goals were guided directly by their people's hunger. They needed food, and they got it in part by raiding Qing cities and government convoys (since the government fed mostly troops and refused to help civilians). They also encouraged grain production in their own lands.[391]

The Nien homeland was filled with fortified villages called "earthwall communities." These walled villages could protect the people and their food stockpiles within. Nien leaders used food as part of their efforts to win over villages in the countryside; recruitment happened on a community- by-community basis, since the villages were relatively autonomous. Siang-tseh Chiang explains that "the Nien policy was to take advantage of every opportunity to assume leadership in the countryside and, in so doing, to isolate the cities."[392] He adds that, despite their mobility in combat, "[i]t is a mistake to assume that the Nien were roaming bandits. They settled within fortified nests, which they strove to safeguard at any price."[393] Because of their emphasis on food, the Nien took a seasonal approach to combat, ranging and raiding for part of the year, and then returning home during the harvest season to protect the fields and reap their crops.[394]

The Taipings aimed for social transformation; when their army took a city, any "loot" went into the public treasury. In 1853, they published an ambitious plan to abolish the landlord system and to redistribute land according to yields. This plan wasn't fully carried out, but rent in many adjacent areas was reduced or eliminated and landlords were forced to stop using hired goons to collect rent.[395]

Organization and Strategy

The Nien and Taiping movements differed greatly in their organizational and strategic approaches. The Nien operated mostly in the vicinity of their homeland, while the Taipings marched huge armies thousands of kilometers, taking major cities and dispatching military expeditions across China. The Nien fielded relatively small militia units with an emphasis on cavalry and mobility, avoiding enemy concentrations. The Taipings mobilized millions of combatants, using infantry to take and hold cities, and engaging in siege warfare both as attackers and defenders. The Nien were loosely organized, and drew heavily on existing family and community networks for their structure, while the Taipings had a clear political and military hierarchy with well-defined units and command structures. The Taipings published political manifestos and florid religious declarations, and were fond of issuing fancy titles to leaders. The Nien wrote virtually nothing about themselves or their ideology.

As Siang-tseh Chiang explains, the Nien were scattered at first: “Before 1853, the primary organization of the Nien was that of numerous bands, with which the leaders sought to satisfy their followers’ desires for material gain or for vengeance. Since undertakings such as smuggling, robbery, and fighting between communities were not pursued without interruption and were not concentrated in a single area, the bands ‘pinched together’ for those purposes were bound to be dispersed in location. Any individual Nien member who, with a certain adventurous aim in mind, was capable of ‘pinching’ together a certain number into a band could claim that he was in possession of a *nien.*”

But as unrest grew in China, the Nien chose to develop a tighter organization and established a general leadership. Around 1856, a firmer structure coalesced which grouped fighters into units under a system of colored banners. Still, they remained less formally organized than the

Taipings, heavily dependent on individual initiative and on the bonds produced by clans and families. This organizational flexibility gave them a strength that the Taipings sometimes lacked, with one observer noting that Taiping armies "would collapse in the event the commander was slain."[396]

Perhaps the greatest difference between the two groups was in their choice of tactics and approach to combat. The Taipings wanted to seize and hold cities. Their whole military was organized to this aim, with the enormous armies (and the huge logistical base) this required. The Taipings were expansionist, though their failure to establish functional organization in some cities they occupied meant that they quickly lost their early territorial gains after marching on.[397] The Nien were not interested in occupying cities. If they took a city, they would break open the granary and the prisons, liberating both food and prisoners. But after raiding, they would leave the city and return home.[398]

The Nien approach to combat emphasized the mobility they gained from having fighters on horseback. They would use scout horses to keep watch for government forces and to avoid targets they could not defeat. The journals of Qing military leaders record their frustration that the Nien avoided their strongest forces and staged surprise attacks on the weakest ones, never giving Qing forces a chance to fight a pitched battle.[399]

Governor-general Liu Ch'ang-Yu bemoaned the elusive nature of the Nien cavalry: "The bandits never fight to the death, nor do they linger on the battlefield. As soon as we definitely locate their traces, they dash off or melt away to either side."[400] If attacked, the Nien would flee, going *just* slow enough for enemy infantry to pursue, but not so fast that their own horses would become exhausted. Then, after the enemy was wearied from several days of marching, the Nien would suddenly turn and counterattack.[401]

Late in the rebellion, the Nien used scorched-earth tactics. All food was stored in fortified villages, wells were plugged, leaving only empty fields.

Government armies were hesitant to enter Nien territory, since it would require them to carry their own food, water, and other supplies. Overburdened government troops would be vulnerable to lightning-fast cavalry attacks and ambushes.[402]

Because of their location, the Nien forces would sometimes cut supply lines between Beijing and Qing armies attacking Taiping territory. (There had been a water route called the Grand Canal which passed from Beijing to near Tienching, but it was severed by the convulsions of the Huang He River.)

None of this is to say that the Taipings were not also innovative in their tactics. Indeed, their relative weakness was one of the reasons they overcame traditional beliefs against women fighting, and it forced them to be more creative in general. Historian Bruce A. Elleman elaborates:

> For example, in taking the small town of Yung-an Zhou on 25 September 1851—the first walled town to be controlled by the Taipings—the Taiping commander, Lo Dagang, ordered his troops to light firecrackers and throw them over the city wall as if there were explosives. In the midst of the ensuing panic, the Taipings scaled the city wall and occupied the town virtually unopposed. Eighteen months later, while advancing down the Yangzi River on Nanjing, the Taipings filled empty ships with mud and rocks and sent them downstream past the Imperial garrisons. Only after the Imperial troops exhausted their ammunition on the decoys did the real Taiping ships appear. In traditional Chinese fashion, based on Sunzi's *Art of War*, the Taipings also took care to use the terrain to their advantage. Once they were forced to evacuate, the Taipings ambushed the Imperial forces along narrow mountain paths, where their superior weapons and horses did them little good.[403]

Prior to their attack on Nanjing, the Taipings smuggled some three thousand fighters into the city disguised as Buddhist monks; once inside, they acted as saboteurs and spies, using torches to signal weak points in the walls. Before their main assault, the Taipings secretly dug three tunnels and placed explosive caches under the walls. They feinted with an “attack” of paper effigies carrying torches as a distraction to draw defenders to the wall. When the defenders lined the walls to gaze out at the effigies, the Taipings detonated their explosives, killing many defenders and opening a hole to march through.[404]

But despite their use of creative and surprising tactics, the Taipings were still limited by their type of mass combat and by a lack of trained and experienced officers.[405] Enormous sieges and infantry battles rarely end in favor of resistance forces. The Taipings won their early successes in part because of support from the peasants for their social justice message, partly because of the weakness of the overwhelmed Qing state, and partly because of their audacious initiative.

But after they took Nanjing, they decided to pause; instead of advancing to take the capital of Beijing, they waited. They lost the initiative. Many historians believe this was a terrible strategic mistake, perhaps the worst single error the Taipings made.[406] Instead of decapitating the Qing regime when they had the chance, they held back. And their hesitation gave the Qing state the time it needed to regroup and to seek military aid from overseas.

Defeat

On the surface, things still looked good for the various rebels. They controlled much of the country, had many millions of supporters, and had been very successful with their creative tactics. So what went wrong?

The Nien and Taipings would both be defeated in the end, but by different means and for different reasons. The Taipings were the first to fall. Some of their problems were internal; though they aspired to a new and spiritual life, many leaders fell into the same bad habits as the previous rulers. Professor Ssu-yü Teng argues "political corruption was the fundamental cause of the failure of the Taipings. After Nanking was conquered, the leaders began to live extravagant, indolent, and licentious lives, with a harem of women, contrary to the avowed platform of monogamy. [Their founder] Hung lived as a Taoist emperor who was not bothered either by state affairs or by foreign dignitaries."[407] This corruption filtered down to middle leadership, and morale among the rank and file suffered greatly. Ssu-yü Teng also argues that the movement was weakened by internal arguments between leaders, each of whom wanted to increase their status.[408]

Though the rigidly hierarchal nature of the movement allowed it to rapidly establish itself in new territory and win early military successes, it was a pseudo-religious hierarchy without accountability. The movement leaders were not elected, nor the grassroots consulted about general policy. After all, why would you need to consult regular people when your orders are being passed down from God?

Yes, hierarchy can strengthen an armed movement engaged in daily life-and-death struggle. But the inability of the lower ranks to recall bad leaders, or hold those leaders accountable, left the rank and file at the mercy of eventual corruption and incompetence in the higher ranks.

In addition to their internal schisms, the Taipings were unable to make allies externally because of their ideology. Aspects of Taiping theology were quite strange both to Christian and traditional Chinese beliefs. Many of the Taiping leadership distrusted people—like the Nien or Muslim rebels—who were unwilling to convert to the Taiping's own religious ideology.

[409] Taiping leaders continued to push their abstract religious ideals even as their practical program of economic equality faltered.

Professor Ssu-yü Teng argues: “The Taiping ideology, a combination of Christian, Confucian, and Taoist ideas intermingled with some attempt at a primitive Communism and some intention of abolishing Chinese traditions and superstitions, was theoretically not bad at all.” But, he points out, the leaders didn’t follow it, and the majority of peasants either didn’t agree with it or didn’t understand it.[410] That said, they did recruit millions of participants successfully, and aspects of their ideology had more potential for broad unification than that of the Nien or the Muslim revolts.[411]

In general, however, the Taiping’s extensive goals for social justice and political revolution made them a threat to almost every established system of power. As James DeFronzo explains, “their sweeping attacks on all three of China’s main religions (Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism) . . . provoked opposition from many traditionalist Chinese strongly influenced by their religious training.”[412] And China’s wealthier class faced both an ideological and an economic threat from the Taipings; of course the wealthy supported the movement’s violent repression.

The Taiping emphasis on holding and fortifying cities—rather than rural guerrilla warfare—was a dangerous strategy during a time of national famine. The cities—fortified but immobile—made promising targets which the Qing armies could attack when and where they pleased. And people trapped in a city under siege do not plant crops or cultivate fields; starvation inevitably weakened the defenders.

The Taipings also represented an enormous threat to foreign industrial capitalists with investments in China. As a result, foreign powers (Britain and France) intervened to support the Qing state with imported firearms and mercenaries. This made the military defeat of the rebellion and the execution of its leaders almost inevitable once the conflict entered its final stage.

The Taiping Rebellion and its repression resulted in somewhere between twenty and thirty million deaths.[413] By way of comparison, this is far larger than the roughly concurrent Irish Potato Famine, which killed about one million people. This number of deaths is in the same magnitude as the First World War, which would kill about fifteen million people, or the Nazi Holocaust at around seventeen million.

Only after the Taiping defeat did the Qing government turn their focus to putting down the other rebellions. The situation for the Nien began to change when Qing representatives started to gather intelligence about the Nien, and came to understand that the Nien actually *had* a homeland and did not simply move around constantly. Then the Qing began—in a process reminiscent of any counterinsurgency program from colonial Kenya to Iraq—to separate the insurgents from their base of support.

Early attacks on Nien territory emphasized destroying village fortifications. But the Qing strategy shifted to divide and conquer, as the governor of Anhwei (Ch'iao Sung-nien) explained: "The extermination of outlaws depends on whether the government is able to separate the wheat from the chaff, not on the destruction of earthwalls. While former rebellious earthwall communities have already been destroyed, loyal ones should be spared."

The Qing rewarded villages for cooperation, especially when villages offered up Nien fighters for execution. Non-cooperative chiefs were punished (often killed) and replaced.[414] (A related approach was used against the Muslim revolts in western China, with the state distinguishing between "good" and "bad" Muslims, and using mass violence to enforce cooperation.)

After the defeat of the Taipings, a massive number of troops were brought into Nien territory, far more than Nien fighters could have defeated in a pitched battle. The Qing troops drove out the fighters and occupied the villages. These enormous garrisons were stationary. Refusing to be lured by

the false retreats of the Nien cavalry, the Qing garrisons simply waited, using their great numerical advantage.[415]

The Nien fighters made numerous attempts to return home, but were repelled by the same earthwalls that had once sheltered them. Without a base for supplies or recuperation—and facing the superior Western arms that had been freed up from battle with the Taipings—the isolated Nien fighters were mopped up or dispersed.[416]

Legacy of Rebellion

Despite their military defeat, mid-nineteenth-century rebellions laid the groundwork for more successful revolts and revolutions later on. As DeFronzo explains, the Nien Rebellion "provided the peasants of central China with a tradition that helped prepare them culturally to support and participate in the Communist-led peasant revolution of the twentieth century."[417] This culture of resistance inspired future revolutionaries in ways both subtle and overt. Sun Yat-Sen, the strategist and revolutionary thinker whose work was a cornerstone for twentieth-century revolts that would end the Qing dynasty for good, was inspired in part by a surviving veteran of the Taiping army.

One of the lessons I take from this history is that resistance efforts—even if they fail objectively—are never wasted. Even a smothered fire may contain embers to spark another flame. Veterans of a struggle can keep a culture of resistance alive until the "material conditions" make revolution more favorable, or until a more effective strategy is devised.

Twentieth-century uprisings in China—like the Republican/Kuomintang uprising that destroyed the Qing dynasty, and the revolution in which the Communists finally took power in 1949—won because they *learned* from the unsuccessful revolts of the past. Of course, neither the

Republican/Kuomintang uprising or the Chinese Communist Revolution truly fulfilled their promises of liberation (which can be said of many revolutions). So we must learn from the ways revolutions succeed and the ways they fail.

The Kuomintang and the Communists achieved success through political and military organization that was superior to the Taipings and the Nien. But the crucial changes were ideological. The Kuomintang were nationalists, and nationalism can have much broader appeal than religious sectarianism. The Communists were even more effective in their efforts to forge a shared identity. They were able to combine some nationalism (especially against the Japanese occupiers in World War II) with class-based unity and the strong ties produced by common revolutionary sacrifice and struggle.

And the Communist emphasis on propaganda and connection with the grassroots made them highly successful at recruiting supporters and members. They appealed to people through abstract religious manifestos, but in a way that fused immediate and tangible goals (e.g., food and economic reform) with grander revolutionary and historical ideals. That is something we can learn from, despite their faults.

Some historians have argued that the Taiping and Nien and other rebellions could have succeeded, had they been able to unify or join their struggles. Certainly the geography was promising, with rebel territory at times almost totally separating the Qing capital (and homeland of Manchuria) from the rest of China. I don’t know if they could have won. The famine that motivated revolts in Eastern China and the intervention of foreign powers were serious obstacles to success.

But there is little doubt that they would have been *more* successful if they had been able to work together and to coordinate more effectively. There were ideological challenges to that goal, but such challenges can

sometimes be overcome. History offers us lessons on how to build successful alliances and coalitions.

ALLIANCES AND COALITIONS

I've argued in this book that many parts of a movement can be complementary even if they aren't formally working together. But sometimes clearer alliances and coalitions are called for. Coalitions—even temporary as they mostly are—have many benefits. They can build strong movements by strengthening ties between different groups and their members. They can allow those groups to share resources and information. And though they typically aren't as militant as the most militant members would prefer, they can also help to radicalize participants.

Coalitions can help movements to avoid divide-and-conquer repression while generating greater political force than their constituent groups.

Not all coalitions are formal bodies with joint mission statements or board meetings. Indeed, some coalitions are loose networks bound by weak ties. Katja M. Guenther, analyzing feminist coalitions in Germany, found that weak coalitions have an important place and that "they are often built at the individual, rather than the organizational, level. The weakness of these coalitions is a condition for their success. Weak coalitions do not require full recognition and discussion of identities, ideologies, and goals." Weak coalitions avoid the conflict that can emerge in more formal coalitions when strong ideologies and identities clash.

What makes a coalition successful in forming and doing its work? Decades of social movement research give us some pretty clear factors.[418]

Ideological alignment and shared goals. To succeed, coalitions must have a common purpose. And members must have enough ideological overlap to see themselves as on the same side, and to share some

mechanisms for collaboration. Edwina Barvosa-Carter explains: “A well-functioning coalition requires organizers and members to find (or create) shared issues that will form the common ground for intra-group communication, decision making, and action.”[419]

She uses the example of the Spanish Coalition for Jobs, a Chicago coalition which formed in the early 1970s to campaign against racist anti-Latinx hiring practices by the government and by companies like Illinois Bell. Some of their component groups wanted to negotiate, and some to protest; the coalition allowed each group to use its preferred tactic, and the result was success.

A basis of shared culture or identity is helpful for coalitions, but sometimes that shared culture is developed *through* cooperation and joint action. In any case, it is diversity that makes coalitions strong, and effective coalitions have effective decision-making and conflict-resolution methods that allow differing perspectives to create some shared plan of action.[420]

Prior social ties and bridge builders. Just as people are more likely to join a resistance group if they already have social ties to its members, coalitions and alliances typically depend on preexisting relationships.

For example, Jerold M. Starr, learning from Pittsburgh’s Alliance for Progressive Action (founded in 1991), explains that the alliance’s “organizers approached the task more from an interpersonal than an ideological perspective. Rather than seeking to build coalitions around issues that share certain principles or a common target, these organizers emphasized recruiting organizers who were practical and easy to work with. And they focused their strategy on long-term base building in which trust slowly was earned by helping with others’ actions.”[421]

This makes sense, since a single really difficult person in a position of power can ruin a whole coalition. The North-West Rebellion might have succeeded, after all, if Riel hadn’t wielded so much control.

Zoltan Grossman, who studied environmental coalitions between Indigenous people and rural settlers, observed: “The initial contact between two communities is almost always made by key individuals whose social position or family history has brought them into contact with both groups.”[422]

These people are called “bridge builders.” The term is used by Fred Rose, who found “bridge builders played a critical role in helping environmental, labor, and peace organizations overcome class divides that made it difficult for them to collaborate.”[423]

Benita Roth summarizes that bridge builders “moved not just between social movement organizations and unorganized constituencies, but also among different movements in one locale. Rose found that bridgebuilding activists tended to be older and experienced in both movement and local electoral politics; that had additionally mastered various styles of communication and were able to adjust their discourse to the appropriate (class) setting.”[424] Judi Bari is a perfect example of a bridge builder.

The Taipings and Nien didn’t have these strong social ties, but they did benefit from the next factor.

Crisis and tangible goals. An emergency—and ideally, a common enemy—is very important for forming alliances and coalitions. Dina G. Okamoto observed that Asian American panethnic coalitions after the civil rights era were driven in part by an apparent increase in anti-Asian violence.[425] Elizabeth Borland observed similar effects for the women’s movement in Buenos Aires, Argentina, during the 1980s and 1990s. She explains that “faced with economic crisis and the possibility of losing ground in its long-standing battle to address gender inequalities, external threats brought activists and groups together. But in addition, three related internal elements—bridge builders, prior social ties, and common ideology—were activated in this period.”[426]

Borland adds: “The external crisis acted like a catalyst, activating those internal elements by making cooperative activism seem both more necessary and more feasible.”[427] (This has much in common with what Jo Freeman suggested about resistance communications networks that could be activated by crisis.) Borland warns, however: “Crises alone do not create coalitions or other kinds of alliances. Activists seeking to cooperate must translate the crisis moment into fertile ground for a coalition, and this process is fraught with difficulty.”[428]

In other words, a crisis can help us *mobilize*, but we still need to *organize*; and a crisis is most useful when we have organized in advance.

The threat or emergency is often something concrete and tangible. Zoltan Grossman analyzed several examples of Indigenous groups aligned with rural settlers (such as farmers, ranchers, and anglers) who fought against a common enemy such as mining, development, and military weapons testing, with a fair amount of success. Prior to the danger the Indigenous people and settlers had been involved in tense disagreements over land use, but their relationships “gradually evolved into successful coalitions to protect the same natural resources from an outside environmental threat. In short, the users of the natural resources ultimately felt that if they continued arguing over fish, there would be none left to argue about.”[429]

Site 41 was another illustration of that phenomenon. Linda Bruce and Kate Harries explain: “Local ministers came with their congregation members for prayer circles, combined with traditional Anishinabe prayers. Tolerance and acceptance of others became the unexpected lasting byproduct of the common goal to protect the water.”[430]

Political opportunity. Coalitions can form to fight a common threat, as above, or they can form because they see a common opportunity, such as a weakness of those in power. A number of the groups I discussed back in the

organization chapter benefited from periods of broad crises like wars and economic instability to push for political changes that would have been impossible during “stable” times.[431]

Plentiful resources. Some researchers and historians found that coalitions can be more successful when member organizations have adequate resources. That is, they aren’t *competing* for resources—especially funding—with each other.[432]

Plentiful resources can certainly be helpful creating cooperative, rather than competitive, relationships between groups. Such resources can also help groups to set up joint organizational or conflict resolution capacity. That said, excessive reliance on outside resources can be harmful to a group’s community accountability (the Nonprofit Industrial Complex) and to its strategic capacity (as discussed in the next section). And of course, there are plenty of cases of successful coalitions which operated on a shoestring, without ample funding.

■ ■ ■

Coalitions and alliances are not always appealing. The time is not always right. Sometimes the requisite factors—or mutual trust and respect—are not present. But sometimes the obstacle is a matter of identity.

Benita Roth argues that, dating back to the 1960s, many leftist groups have avoided joint organizing for ideological reasons. Rather than reaching out, they have been motivated by what she calls the “ethos of organizing one’s own.” She cites an early occurrence in the decision by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee to kick out white activists. This choice, she explains, “the result of the influx of white volunteers into the organization in the wake of Freedom Summer, were (and still are) seen as sanctioning the New Left idea that the most authentic, and therefore most radical, forms of activism involved fighting one’s own oppression.”[433]

Roth argues that “in the 1960s and 1970s, brakes were put on coalition formation by feminists across racial/ethnic lines by activist notions of good politics. Despite elements of an overlapping feminist agenda, coalition formation was not prioritized. Indeed, as feminists organized in different racial/ethnic oppositional communities, coalition was deemed to be inauthentic and unwise strategy; cross-racial feminist organizing was seen as simultaneously impossible and, if possible, dangerous to the cause.”[434]

This idea became commonly accepted in left milieus. “Within a cycle of social protest, ideas may be current that are irresistible to activists, whether or not they are well suited to their ultimate intentions.”[435] Roth speculates: “The ethos of organizing one’s own may have also represented a way of managing competing demands on their time and loyalty as activists, but subscribing to it was not, I argue, primarily a matter of strategy; subscription was a matter of belief, of wisdom received from previous experiences on the left. Focusing on organizing one’s own meant that efforts toward coalition were at the very least downplayed, and at the most held to be politically suspect. The failure of emerging feminists to form coalitions across racial/ethnic divides was due to extrarational calculations —that is to say, ideas about the truly authentic way to organize as radical women.”[436]

So the anti-coalition attitude was not so much about weighing the pros and cons of coalition organizing; it was about radical identity. It was about prioritizing identity over long-term strategy. And, Roth explains, “coalitions represent challenges to activists’ identities.”[437] She notes: “The disparagement of coalition formation was not the result of strategic decision making, but resulted from activists holding to a set of ideological directives about how to do politics the right way. Instead of working together on shared political goals, feminist women in different racial/ethnic communities invested in forms of organizing that highlighted the perceived necessity of maintaining difference in organizing.”[438]

On some level this “ethos of organizing one’s own” is perhaps also a response to growing fragmentation of social movements. It’s also an expression of *strategy follows structure*; that assumptions about how to organize can curtail a movement’s options before it has even decided on its goals.

But joint organizing, alliances, and coalitions have many potential benefits in the right situations. Among them, the ability to greatly enhance a movement’s *strategic capacity.*

STRATEGIC CAPACITY AND THE UFW

In the 1960s there were 400,000 farmworkers in California, many of them migrant laborers working under harsh and sometimes dangerous conditions without job security or unions. The highly seasonal nature of harvesting made it difficult for these farmworkers—many of whom belonged to marginalized groups and were not US citizens—to organize. There had been attempts to unionize them for sixty years. But those efforts failed, even when run by well-established unions with ample resources.

Things changed because of the United Farm Workers, a small, upstart union which rapidly gained traction and members in the early 1960s. By the 1970s, they had more than fifty thousand dues paying members, and established legislation in California giving farmworkers collective bargaining rights.[439] The United Farm Workers succeeded at the same time as the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC, an offshoot of the large AFL-CIO) foundered.

“Why did the insurgent United Farm Workers (UFW) succeed while its better-resourced rival [AWOC] failed?” asks Marshall Ganz. Ganz (who was also responsible for Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign strategy) participated in the UFW organizing at the time and wrote about it decades

later. He argues that conventional explanations for why social movements succeed are woefully inadequate.

“Social scientists tend to account for these events,” he notes, “by arguing one version or another of ‘the time for change was right’ while many historians attribute success to the intervention of gifted, charismatic individuals.”[440] Certainly charismatic people are often present; in the case of UFW, people like Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. But that explanation is not enough.

Ganz writes: “Students of strategic leadership . . . even in management, military, and political studies, focus more on what leaders do and how strategy works than on explaining why leaders of some organizations devise more effective strategy than others. Popular accounts of insurgent success attribute effective strategy to uniquely gifted leaders rather than offering systematic accounts of conditions under which leaders are more or less likely to devise effective strategy.”[441]

Some groups are intrinsically better at coming up with good strategies. Ganz calls this “strategic capacity.” According to Ganz, strategic capacity is critical to resistance victories; it is what allows marginal groups with limited resources to flourish and win. Ganz identifies specific factors responsible for strategic capacity. But the lessons he learned will make more sense if we first take a quick look at the early victories of the United Farm Workers.

Origins and Leadership

The two main unions active in farmworker struggle in the 1960s had very different structures and approaches. The Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC) was created by the AFL-CIO in 1959. It used a top-down bureaucratic approach with traditional tactics focusing on short-term

wins. Ganz explains: “Its principle tactics—organizing at early morning pickup sites . . . for wage strikes, exercising insider political pressure, and recruiting through labor contractors—extended a familiar repertoire of conventional labor union tactics that had served in quite different historical settings.”[442] AWOC’s first phase ended when it threatened violence against nonunion migrant workers brought in through the Federal Bracero Program. Several AWOC leaders were arrested. The committee was officially shut down when AFL-CIO auditors found other problems on the books.

The second AWOC phase was a brief, unofficial team which organized in the aftermath on the grassroots level. They convened area councils around local community concerns and networked with farmworkers and supporters. Their success, ironically, meant that in 1962 the AFL-CIO sent in another “professional” team to take over and return to the old-school organizing style.[443]

The UFW had a much different history, rooted in a predecessor movement called the Farm Workers Association (FWA, founded in 1962). Emerging from the grassroots, FWA organizers believed that previous direct action efforts had failed because they lacked a long-term organizational base. Rather than focusing on dramatic but ephemeral action, they decided to build their support and organizational capacity for five years before engaging in large-scale confrontational direct action. In their first three years they built up social services (including a death benefit), a newspaper, a credit union, and a small staff along with a membership of some 1,500. (They also engaged in occasional rent strikes and small work stoppages, demonstrating a good grasp of a diversity of tactics.)[444]

The two unions had very different approaches to leadership and strategy development. Marshall Ganz summarizes the AWOC leadership: “All were white men, age 52 or over, with extensive union backgrounds and experience at ‘insider’ politics. . . . A generation of ‘union men’ who valued ‘legitimate’ ways to do union work and had little understanding of workers

different from themselves or of a public whose support they would need. They had no biographical experience of the farmworker community, few sociocultural networks reaching beyond their milieu (much less into the farmworker community) and tactical repertoires learned by organizing people like themselves in circumstances far different from those they now faced."[445]

Ganz observes: "The composition of the FWA leadership team was far different from that of the AWOC, combining insiders and outsiders, those with strong and weak ties, and a diversity of salient repertoires. The FWA strategy was developed by leaders who were Mexican and Mexican American men and women mostly under 25, whose lives were rooted in the farmworker community but extended well beyond it—such as Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, and Gilbert Padilla. . . . FWA leaders thus drew on life experience that combined 'local knowledge' of the farmworker world with experience in military service, college, small business, and professional organizing. . . . The leadership of the FWA also had a deep personal interest in finding ways to succeed at what was a personal mission. Not only had they come from farmworker backgrounds, they had given up secure jobs and other opportunities to risk building a new organization from the ground up."[446]

The FWA developed creative and inclusive approaches to strategic discussion. They had regular board meetings with clear agendas, as well as separate strategy sessions. They used their social ties—along with advisory councils—to gather input and ideas from many different sources, especially farmworkers and allies. The AWOC, in contrast, had irregular closed meetings without agendas and did not set aside time for strategic visioning.[447]

The two organizations were also structurally different. The AWOC was funded from the outside by the AFL-CIO, while the FWA was supported by dues and volunteers from the membership they had cultivated. Ganz

explains: “Resources flowed from the top down within the AWOC, motivating the development of strategies that would satisfy those at the top, while the FWA’s financial and human resources flowed upward, motivating the development of strategies that could yield the needed resources.”[448]

Because AWOC did not rely on dues from the people it was attempting to organize, it was not accountable to them. And so the leadership had little motivation to build a strong organizational base or effective strategy. “AWOC leaders had the resources to keep making the same mistakes, as long as the people at the top were satisfied.”[449]

The Delano Grape Strike

The FWA’s original plan to focus on organizing for the first five years was interrupted by an unexpected opportunity in 1965. A small strike among Filipino workers (supported by AWOC) created excitement and potential for mobilization among Mexican workers. The FWA was worried about committing to a lengthy strike because of its limited resources, but decided to take the risk of a strike, anyway.

The AWOC relied mostly on stationary pickets; striking farmworkers would picket only the farms they worked on. The FWA (now renamed the *National* Farm Workers Association) did not have the resources for a strike fund and so could not afford to adopt stationary, defensive tactics. Indeed, the first day of the NFWA strike “only 100 to 200 activists reported to begin picketing. Realizing that an effective strike would require the participation of many more workers than these 200, the NFWA devised the ‘roving picket lines’ tactic.”[450]

Which is to say, they seized the initiative with mobile and short-duration actions. “Car caravans of pickets arrived at grape fields waving flags and banners, called the workers out of the fields, and then moved on

to the next location. With the ‘roving picket line,’ a relatively small core of NFWA activists could sustain the strike longer—and with less money—than anyone expected. They became the core of a full-time activist cadre, many of whom would become organizers.”[451]

Specifically *because* the NFWA lacked a strike fund, they had to reach out and build strong relationships with other organizations to provide funds and volunteer assistance. (The AWOC, with its own “legitimate” funding sources, did not deign to do this.)

The fact that the NFWA was so poor in financial resources forced organizers to take a creative and aggressive approach to expansion and organizing. And because their movement was run on a shoestring, expansion of members was cheap. As Marshall Ganz explains: “To retain the support of the strikers, NFWA leaders believed they had to share the strikers’ level of sacrifice, which meant strike benefits of $1.00 per week (later $5.00 per week) and food orders from a strike ‘store.’ . . . Because of their depth of personal commitment, NFWA officers moved to Delano, became full-time volunteers, and supported themselves as strikers—which, in turn, deepened their commitment to winning the strike and made it easier for them to claim similar levels of commitment from others.”[452]

Ganz adds “because the cost per person was so low (food, a bed, $1.00 per week), the NFWA could relatively easily add full-time volunteers, and it began accepting students and religious activists who came to Delano to join the strike on the same terms. By enabling large numbers of people to volunteer, the NFWA developed a new talent pool on which it could draw for the myriad new responsibilities that had begun to emerge. Expansion of this cadre . . . made it possible for the NFWA to field large numbers of full-time ‘troops’ for strike, boycott, and political activities.”[453]

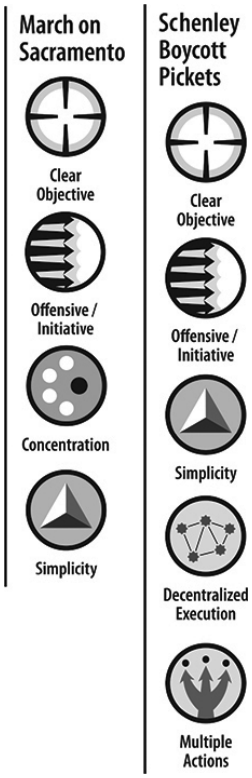
Making the NFWA relatively open to new people "facilitated the emergence of new leadership that, in turn, expanded, enriched, and altered the composition of the original NFWA leadership group, in ways that further enhanced its strategic capacity."[454] And finally, "these choices led to the emergence of a 'charismatic community' based on 'vows of voluntary poverty' that shared an almost religious commitment to winning the strike."[455]

As the strike proceeded, the courts and police cracked down on organizers, passing injunctions against strikers. The NFWA treated these injunctions as opportunities for civil disobedience and outreach, openly violating injunctions in ways that got attention and echoed the nonviolent strategy used by many in the contemporaneous civil rights movement. The AWOC did not participate in such actions on "the advice of its AFL-CIO lawyers to avoid costly legal entanglements . . . The NFWA, in contrast, based its response on the advice of volunteer civil rights lawyers, a far wider tactical repertoire, and great willingness to take risks."[456]

The NFWA's growing media profile and effectiveness also helped to raise funds. But as the end of the harvest season approached without clear victories, there was clear danger for the young organization. Once the grape harvest was over, and their labor was not needed, the seasonal workers couldn't create leverage through strikes. So they decided to diversify their tactics even more, and to escalate.

Boycott and March

To increase the amount of political and economic force they could mobilize, the NFWA needed to bring new tactics into the mix, tactics that would still be effective after the harvest season. They decided to call a boycott against



Schenley Industries, a liquor company which owned thousands of acres of grape fields in the Delano region.

The boycott required that they expand their scope of action beyond the agricultural core in California. To be effective, a boycott requires large numbers of participants (and, ideally, the threat that even more people will join in). And so in 1966 the NFWA sent organizers to major cities across the United States to stage pickets of liquor stores. Those organizers had few resources—they had to raise funds and mobilize once they arrived—but they were strongly motivated.

The NFWA knew that they lacked adequate political force to target Schenley directly, so they went after secondary targets, similar to SHAC. They picketed liquor stores in major cities until those stores agreed to remove Schenley products from the shelves. (Once again, the AWOC didn't participate in the boycott because of legal concerns.)[457]

Simultaneously, the NFWA organized a march in California where they had the greatest numbers. The march route wound its way from Delano through a number of small farmworker towns to the state capitol in Sacramento. (There they intended to push for state intervention against grape companies.) Along the way they gave talks, mobilized workers, and agitated both for the strike and for broader issues of social justice for farmworker communities. Again, the AWOC declined to participate because they saw the march as an unconventional tactic and because they felt it too broad in its inclusion of religious, civil rights, and revolutionary themes.[458]

A week before the march arrived in Sacramento, Schenley Industries caved and agreed to recognize the NFWA as a union. The marchers

completed their route, anyway, arriving in Sacramento with an amazing 10,000 participants.[459]

Instead of being destroyed by *divide and conquer* like many upstart groups, the NFWA was able to build movement alliances while simultaneously pitting elites against each other. Ganz writes: “Because of the strategic capacity it had developed, the union had learned to keep finding ways to turn meager resources into effective economic weapons. The world of agribusiness turned out to be less monolithic than had been thought as divisions emerged between local agricultural corporations, whose entire business was farming, and national corporations, with major investments in brand names. It made little sense for large corporations to risk compromising their brands for the sake of minor farming operations, especially when they had union contracts elsewhere.”[460]

How to build strategic capacity

In his writings, Marshall Ganz identifies a number of key factors that give a group strategic capacity. Three of those factors are characteristics of the leadership team—that is, of the group developing strategy for an organization. He argues that for any given group, the “likelihood their strategy will be effective increases with their *motivation*, access to *salient knowledge*, and the quality of the *heuristic processes* they employ in their deliberations.”[461] Let’s break that down.

Strong motivation. Ganz explains: “Motivation influences creative output because it affects the focus one brings to one’s work, the ability to concentrate for extended periods of time, persistence, willingness to take risks, and ability to sustain high energy.”[462] Motivated people are willing to strike out in new directions, learn new skills and acquire new information, and go outside the routines of an ineffective status quo. People who are not

expecting to win—or people who are just “phoning it in”—do not do those things.

As we saw, members of the UFW and its predecessors had incredibly strong levels of motivation derived from their strong relationships, their grounding in the community, and a very strong will to succeed. For the AWOC the fight was just one more labor dispute among many, the outcome of which would have little effect on the executive of the union.

Ganz suggests: “In the group work setting of a leadership team devising strategy, individual motivation is enhanced when people enjoy autonomy, receive positive feedback from peers and superiors, and are part of a team competing with other teams. It is dampened when they enjoy little autonomy, get no feedback or only negative feedback from peers and superiors, and face intense competition within the team.”[463]

Salient knowledge, including skills and intelligence. One part of salient knowledge for Ganz is “possession of domain-relevant skills, mastery of which is requisite to developing novel applications.” Ganz uses the example of jazz pianists, who must become proficient piano players before they can improvise well. Or to put it another way, you have to know how to plan a direct action before you can be genuinely flexible and creative in how you apply direct action.

Another aspect of salient knowledge is good intelligence, including “access to local knowledge of the constituencies, opponents, and third parties with which one is interacting. We expect effective military strategists to have command not only of the art of strategy but also of an understanding of the troops, enemy, battlefield, and so forth.”[464]

The UFW organizers, many of whom were relatively experienced and deeply embedded in the community, had this knowledge. They also had a knowledge of other struggles that had happened for farmworkers and in their cultural past. (During the Delano Grape Strike, for example, graffiti

might feature Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata.) This meant that UFW organizers were not simply fumbling around or operating on trial and error. They drew on a culture of resistance; they knew which tactics had worked and which hadn't, and they could draw on personal and historical experience to solve strategic dilemmas and to inform innovative approaches.

Heuristic processes. Strategic thinking is about creative problem solving; about using information we have in new and creative ways. Ganz cites the Biblical story of David and Goliath: "David found his skill with stones useful because he could imaginatively recontextualize the battlefield, transforming it into a place where, as a shepherd, he knew how to protect his flock from wolves and bears. An outsider to the battle, he saw resources others did not see and opportunities they did not grasp. Goliath, on the other hand, the insider, failed to see a shepherd boy as a threat."[465]

The notion of "heuristics"—meaning a logical shortcut or practical rule—is not something most people are familiar with, but it is important. (I'll come back to it in the next section.)

Ganz also outlines leadership and organizational factors that tend to give a group better strategic capacity.

Diverse leadership. The single most important characteristic of good leadership teams is diversity. Ganz explains: "Teams composed of persons with heterogeneous perspectives are likely to make better decisions than homogeneous teams, especially in solving novel problems, because they can access more resources, bring a broader range of skills to bear on decision making, and benefit from a diversity of views."[466]

Teams with good strategic capacity tend to have committed people from many different backgrounds with different experiences. And a variety of studies have shown that the more women are present in a group, the better that group will be at problem-solving in general.[467]

Teams with high strategic capacity have both strong and weak ties to different communities and networks, and they can employ a diversity of tactics. But diversity isn't enough; there are organizational factors needed to ensure that good strategy emerges from discussion.

Good organization. Ganz repeatedly emphasizes the importance of a good deliberation process that includes regular meetings and separate strategy sessions, open to diverse perspectives.[468] He advises: "Regular deliberation facilitates initiative by encouraging the periodic assessment of activities, regardless of whether or not there is a crisis. And deliberation open to heterogeneous points of view—or 'deviant' perspectives—facilitates better decisions, encourages innovation, and develops group capacity to perform cognitive tasks more creatively and effectively."[469] In other words, making sure that everyone has a chance to speak is key; and other research shows that groups are better at solving problems when speaking time is shared fairly among the members.[470]

Diverse perspectives can't be incorporated into the strategy if people are afraid to express themselves, or if the group process requires conformity or an authoritarian approach. The group process must facilitate both divergent thinking (to express different perspectives) and, eventually, convergent thinking (to arrive at joint action). "For this purpose, conflict resolution by negotiation, accompanied by voting, may be preferable to either fiat or consensus because it preserves difference yet makes collective action possible."[471]

The source of the group's resources is also strategically important. Dues and donations from the constituency are good for strategic capacity. In contrast, as Ganz explains: "Reliance on resources drawn primarily from outside one's core constituency—even when those resources are internal to the organization, such as an endowment—may dampen leaders' motivation to devise effective strategy. As long as they attend to the politics that keep the bills paid, they can keep doing the same thing 'wrong.'"[472] Diverse

sources of resources can grant “the strategic flexibility that goes with greater autonomy of greater room to maneuver.”[473]

And lastly, accountability is crucial. Unaccountable leadership has little incentive to respond to group needs. Ganz explains: “Leadership teams that are self-selected or elected by constituencies to whom they are accountable have more strategic capacity than those selected bureaucratically.” [474] He mentions self-selected leaders because they are often skilled and strongly motivated, which matters a lot strategically. “Although elective and entrepreneurial leadership selection processes may be in tension with one another, either is likely to yield more strategic capacity than bureaucratic leadership selection.”[475]

Final Factors

Older, established organizations tend to have more resources, but diminished strategic capacity. Ganz argues that older organizations may become “senescent,” strategically dysfunctional, adapted to obsolete conditions, and inhibited by inertia. “Leaders of the newer organizations were recently selected, have more organizational flexibility, and work in closer articulation with the environment. Leaders of older organizations were often selected in the past, are constrained by institutional routines, and may have resources that allow them to operate in counterproductive insulation from the environment.”[475]

He adds: “Changes in organizational structure that reduce leaders’ accountability or need to mobilize resources from constituents—or changes in deliberative process that suppress dissent—can diminish strategic capacity, even as resources grow. . . . Older organizations are likely to have less strategic capacity than new ones.”[476]

Of course, there are ideological factors that can suppress strategic capacity. An insistence on ideological homogeneity among decision-makers will limit a group's ability to come up with new or unorthodox ideas. And a lack of diversity also means a lack of social ties to draw on. As I've argued throughout this book, for a resistance group to become isolated—for it to separate itself from potential allies along rigid ideological fracture lines—is a major strategic and organizational liability.

Further, it is in turbulent conditions where strategic capacity is most valuable. When the situation is stable and predictable, the groups with the most resources are more likely to win.

The UFW's strategic capacity had major long-term benefits for communities of resistance across the whole region. As Ganz explains: "The UFW had also played a major role in the emergence of a Chicano movement in the Southwest, had recruited and trained hundreds of community activists, and had become a significant player in California politics."[477]

The contrast that Ganz illustrates in the California farmworker struggle echoes the contrast of the cathedral and the bazaar. The centrally organized AWOC, with its cathedral-style of organizing, was too rigid, too slow, and too isolated from the grassroots to adopt an effective strategy. But the UFW and its allies—with their bazaar-style low-overhead, regular short actions, and inventive use of diverse tactics—were able to intelligently build a winning strategy as they went. Crucially, the UFW was not isolated, nor was their approach entirely ad hoc. They were able to implement and adapt their strategy as they went *because they had spent years doing recruitment; they had laid the organizational, social, political, and strategic groundwork they knew they would need.*

■ ■ ■

We fight to win, but even a loss can be educational for a thoughtful group with a desire to develop strategic capacity. We can often learn *more* from failure than from success, provided we are willing to think critically and strategically, and to face hard truths when they arise.

We resisters have fewer resources. Whether we win or lose depends on whether we have the *strategy* to employ those limited resources effectively. One of the fundamental factors that determines whether a movement succeeds is whether it can learn and adapt *faster* than those in power—whether it can create new movement cycles, and prolong the effectiveness of new tactics and methods of organization.

Stan Goff argues that the left has been unsuccessful in recent decades because leftists "have failed to interrogate the premises of their own notions of strategy" and so continue to pursue strategies that are obviously not working. He adds: "Developing the ability to conduct this interrogation is the essential first step for getting out of the dominant feedback loop of daily practice and understanding and positioning oneself to really challenge the system."

"Falling back on my own experience as a member of the armed forces and the combat arms, I can conclude that every failure of strategy is at bottom a failure of plans to conform to reality. In effect, every strategic failure is a failure of intelligence . . . information that is interpreted to make sense of an overall situation."[478]

Agility is important; that doesn't mean resistance movements win through complete spontaneity, however, or that strategic planning is irrelevant. As Dwight Eisenhower said: in war, plans are useless, but *planning* is essential. It is what allows us to explore future contingencies and prepare for them. Any skilled strategist, whether a chess player or a Zapatista subcommandante, thinks several moves ahead.

Successful resistance movements employ careful planning in addition to the other tactical precepts already discussed. Writing about the Việt Minh,

George K. Tanham observed: “On the strictly military plane, a study of the Vietminh’s successes suggests that they rest chiefly on three interrelated factors: (1) a set of simple tactical principles; (2) full, accurate, and up-to-date intelligence; and (3) detailed planning.”[479]

But Goff suggests that developing strategic capacity in leaders is more important than assembling a “playbook” of formulae and rigidly adhering to them. Rather, he draws on the work of military strategist John Boyd, explaining: “The centerpiece of Boyd’s theory is that one’s adversary is always human. . . . To defeat the leadership (a perceiving human) is the goal, according to Boyd, and that is accomplished by maintaining the initiative through audacious, often uncoordinated, rapid actions until the adversary is overwhelmed by the ‘mismatches’ between perception and reality. These mismatches are not the result of your ‘plan.’ They are an outcome of your agility—your superior ability to accept chaos and adapt rapidly to changing patterns. Improvisation.”[480]

He observes that “[t]his type of agility can only be achieved in a decentralized milieu” because in a rigidly hierarchal system it simply takes too long for information to flow up the hierarchy and then back down again.[481] Having clear long-term goals is important, but day-to-day strategy is more about adaptable decision-making loops. Being smart, quick, and persistent is more useful than a rigid long-term plan. Goff suggests:

> Constants in any adversarial struggle—be it a community issue fight or guerrilla warfare—include effective logistics, well-developed intelligence (which is information plus analysis), and a culture of self-discipline and leadership development. Organizational forms must adapt. There is no one-size-fits-all.
>
> The twin focus must be on developing leaders who can inspire cooperation for action, and have well-developed tactical skills (the bag of tricks), but most of all, finely honed strategic intuition

combined with the ability to quickly and seamlessly adapt to change and to be decisive about what trick to pull out of her bag.[482]

DEVISING STRATEGY

How can we devise effective strategy? Some methods are discussed by Gene Sharp and Jamila Raqib in their short book *Self Liberation: A Guide to Strategic Planning to End a Dictatorship or Other Oppression*. Having directly and indirectly advised a number of (largely successful) movements, Sharp writes from experience.

He warns that people cannot gain advanced strategic knowledge, or develop strategic analysis, merely from lectures and workshops (even if the presenters are excellent). While short tactical trainings before particular events are helpful, he found that "groups that received the lectures, courses, and workshops appear to have remained unable themselves to plan grand strategies for their conflicts. Those groups have usually been unable even to prepare strategies for smaller limited campaigns intended to achieve modest goals."[483] The body of knowledge needed for struggle, they observed, was too large and complex to be communicated merely by speech.

What knowledge is needed? Sharp and Raqib (writing about nonviolence specifically) suggest that three kinds of knowledge are required for successful struggle:

1) Knowledge of the conflict situation, the opponents, and the society and its needs. [i.e., strategic intelligence.]
2) In-depth knowledge of the nature and operation of the technique of nonviolent action. [i.e., tactical knowledge and competence.]
3) The knowledge and ability required to analyze, think, and plan strategically. [i.e., heuristic processes.]

A group with good strategic capacity has these kinds of knowledge. But Sharp and Raqib warn that simply bringing together different people, each of whom has one type of knowledge, is insufficient. Planners must have overlapping knowledge and the ability to *synthesize* the three types to come up with a "wise grand strategy."

For strategic knowledge, they suggest "it may be useful to prepare an assessment of the absolute and comparative strengths of the oppressive system and of the existing and potential democracy movement. Where are the opponents strong and where are they weak? Where are the resisters strong and where are they weak?"[484] (I discussed these ideas in the intelligence chapter.)

"The main point is to know the strengths and weaknesses of both sides, their sources of power, and the likely impacts of the use of the power of both sides in an open conflict. How do those strengths and weaknesses compare with each other? Also, how might the respective strengths and weaknesses of the two sides be changed? . . . Consideration must also be given to psychological, social, economic, and political countermeasures that may be employed by the opponents. The capacity and willingness of the resisting population to persist in their struggle for liberation despite repression, and other counteractions by the opponents, also need to be assessed."[485]

Sharp and Raqib have advice on selecting people to draft strategy:

> The personnel of a drafting group need to be considered very carefully, because not everyone who is eager to participate may be the most wise and skilled. Persons who have failed to carry out the essential readings on this subject will not be suitable. Outsiders, who cannot know the country and society in-depth, should not be included in the drafting process.

> The participation of poorly informed, dogmatic, or self-centered persons in the planning of a future nonviolent struggle can produce disasters. Additionally, it is important that the planners not be individuals with personal agendas that can interfere with the planning process.
>
> Positively, the drafters must be persons who have demonstrated the capacity to think and plan strategically. Most people do not at a given moment have this capacity.[486]

Once selected, drafters must identify *good intermediate goals* for a campaign. Sharp and Raqib suggest: "The issues for limited campaigns should be ones that can arouse wide support throughout the population."[487] Resistance movements don't always need to have majority support. But they benefit greatly from having—at the very least—common intermediate goals with potential allies or supporters.

Radicals are sometimes loath to identify even medium-term goals that fall short of the ultimate purpose. But Sharp and Raqib advise: "Liberation, not perfection" should be a guiding ethic behind intermediate goals. "Successfully bringing down a dictatorship, or other oppression, will not immediately produce a near-perfect new system. It will, however, be a major improvement over the past."[488]

With potential intermediate goals in mind, they suggest applying "the test of whether each resistance campaign will weaken or strengthen the opponents' power. This also applies to evaluating possible strategies and objectives that are intended for limited campaigns. The converse is at least equally relevant: Will the sources of the resisters' power be strengthened or weakened by each limited campaign?"[489] (For more questions like this, flip back to the "Planning an Action" section on page 555.)

A path to victory is not always clear, especially in the early stages of resistance. But if your group or movement can conduct a campaign that will

increase your size or power—like the temperance movement's local initiatives or the UFW's roving pickets—you will open up new strategic possibilities and engage new comrades with whom to explore those possibilities.

Four-Part Strategic Planning

In the Second World War, a key decision made by the Allies was to concentrate their efforts first on knocking Germany out of the war. The United States would limit Pacific battles with Japan until the war in Europe was won. This meant—among other things—better odds in each fight: all of the Allies versus Germany, and then all of the Allies against Japan.

Here's a good summary of the Allied strategy that came out of a conference in Washington after Pearl Harbor (as stated in Kent Greenfield's *American Strategy in World War II*):

1) Beat Germany first, meanwhile containing the Japanese.
2) Wear down the strength of the enemy by [encircling] Axis-held territory [and tightening that encirclement] as fast as the resources of the Allies permitted.
3) The means to be used: naval blockade; all-out aid to the Russians; strategic bombing; intensive cultivation of resistance in Nazi-occupied countries; limited offences with mobile forces at points where locally superior Allied forces, particularly forces strong in armor, could be brought to bear with telling effect—all directed toward the final knockout punch.[490]

It's a solid expression of strategy: a clear primary goal, secondary priorities, and notes on the tactics, capacities, and alliances to be developed. Various contingency plans and timetables were prepared based on how quickly Germany could be worn down.

Simply *agreeing* on a strategy apparently did wonders for the Allied strategic staff. Before the agreement, in the closing days of 1941, a young Dwight Eisenhower wrote in his notes: "The struggle to secure the adoption

by all concerned of a common concept of strategy is wearing me down. Everybody is too much engaged with small things of his own. We've got to go to Europe and fight—and we've got to quit wasting resources all over the world."[491] After agreement was reached, Eisenhower's notes turned to jubilation: "at long last . . . we are all committed to one concept of fighting! . . . we won't just be thrashing around in the dark."[492]

The summary above encapsulates Allied strategy pretty well, partly because it answers four big questions that have to be answered to describe any campaign strategy:

1) What are your primary goals?
2) What strategies and intermediate campaigns (or operations) are needed to achieve those goals?
3) What tactics can you employ to advance these strategies?
4) What are the capacities and alliances you must cultivate to succeed?

This is a goal-oriented approach that works backward from the goals of a campaign: goals, strategies, tactics, and capacities.

You'll notice that the Allied strategy above doesn't explicitly include factors like communications, logistics, or intelligence (although they are implied). Generals can get away with this because they already have whole corps of people paid to handle those things. Resistance movements mostly have to build this capacity up from scratch.

Let's use this four-part strategic plan to look at some examples of movements I've already discussed in this book. (I'll simplify and generalize quite a bit here.)

Let me start with the North-West Rebellion, focusing on the differing plans of Riel and Dumont:

1) **Goals:** *Shared:* Assert Indigenous and Métis self-government, stop or limit continued settlement, force the redress of grievances and negotiations with Canadian state on equal nation-to-nation footing.
2) **Strategies & Campaigns:** *Riel:* Build local government council and declare self-government, request surrender from North-West Mounted Police in area, ensure favorable status in the eyes of God. *Dumont*: Build local council as well as militia organization, stage immediate attacks against local forts for supplies, guerrilla warfare against reinforcements, destroy enemy infrastructure. Use success to build alliances.
3) **Main Tactics:** *Riel:* Lobbying and proposed negotiation, prayer and religious edicts, waiting for last stand at Batoche. *Dumont:* Surprise attacks and ambushes, seizures of supplies and battlefield recovery, train-derailments, destruction of rail and telegraph lines.
4) **Capacities & Alliances:** *Riel:* Godliness and piety. *Dumont:* Organizational alliances with Indigenous warriors, scouting/intelligence and communications networks, logistical support.

Obviously Riel's strategies, tactics, and capacity did not match his goal of contending with a well-armed colonial power intent on settling claimed territory. And Dumont was never able to fully implement his strategy.

A more internally consistent and coherent strategy would be that of SHAC, as discussed in the previous chapter.

1) **Goals:** Disrupt (and ideally bankrupt) Huntingdon Life Sciences to stop HLS's animal testing.
2) **Strategies & Campaigns:** Research and identify secondary or tertiary targets; distribute information about those targets;

disrupt and harass those targets until they cease doing business with HLS; publicize information about successes and actions to encourage more action.

3) **Main Tactics:** Intelligence gathering, outreach to sympathizers, a wide variety of disruptive direct action.
4) **Capacities & Alliances:** In central group especially: intelligence, communications, strategic planning. Allied and sympathetic action groups with reconnaissance, action planning, and tactical skills.

That strategy met with considerable success, and brought down a corresponding amount of repression.

A third strategy for comparison would be that of the Nien Rebellion in China, which looked something like this:

1) **Goals:** Ensure adequate food supply for people; disrupt or neutralize Qing power in region.
2) **Strategies & Campaigns:** Build up fortified villages in home area; encourage and protect agricultural production; raid Qing strongholds and convoys for food and supplies; harass and drive out Qing troops in vicinity.
3) **Main Tactics:** Highly mobile guerrilla warfare tactics including surprise attacks and ambushes, cavalry action, scorched earth defense, raiding and scouting parties.
4) **Capacities & Alliances:** Ally with and develop support base in earthwall villages and agriculture, maximize mobility and intelligence capacity, enhance security and safety in homeland.

Again, a good strategy, which failed perhaps because it wasn't ambitious *enough*—the Nien were focused on their own concerns and region, not on broader revolution, so they failed to join with other rebellions

of the time to bring down the Qing dynasty. But, as good strategies do, the Nien approach involved goals, strategies, tactics, and capacities that were matching and complementary.

Practical Strategy Tools

How can you start devising your strategy? Remember, first of all, that strategy is an iterative process. You try something with the people and resources you can access, you see how it works, you reevaluate, and you try again.

If you wait for the perfect strategy you will be waiting until the seas rise up and the sun bakes the Earth to a cinder. Better to identify intermediate goals that can advance your strategy in the short to medium-term, and try to work toward them while developing your movement's strengths and capacities over the long term. (These intermediate goals, as discussed in the previous chapter, are best if SMART—specific, measurable, attainable, and so on.) These goals should be things that can mobilize friends and allies. (Charles Dobson argues: "Intergroup cooperation is the engine of real progress at the grassroots.")

Also, remember that while different ideologies and schools of political thought give various strategic templates for orthodox action, those templates—even when they are very good—rarely apply tidily to any local circumstance. They are no universal formulae for success; effective strategy will always require adaptation and strategic problem-solving.

I like the problem-solving approach taken by mathematician George Pólya, who argues that people approaching a problem they don't know how to solve should start with a *tool-based* approach. That is, what tools do you already have that can help solve this problem? I'm not a mechanic, but I've fixed plenty of broken machines on our farm because I know how to

recognize a bolt, where to find a wrench, and how to tell if some part is damaged and in need of replacement.

I hope I have given you a number of strategic tools through the course of this book to help you create and refine good resistance strategy. But let me conclude this chapter by outlining some of the practical strategic tools you can put to use:

Work forward with what you have. What can you accomplish now with the people and resources you already have? What is a concrete step forward you can make right now? Are there obvious first steps that will advance your campaign and build capacity without being too costly in time or resources? What tactics are you good at? What short-term projects are people excited about?

Envision the outcome and work backward. Clarifying your goal can help greatly. Indecision or conflict often come when there is no clear picture of success. What does your victorious outcome look like? What people or abilities or accomplishments do you have in the winning scenario? Working backward, how do you develop those things in intermediate steps? Break down big goals into smaller subgoals that are easier to accomplish. Maybe you can work backward *and* forward at the same time, and figure out where the two approaches meet to form a continuous trajectory.

Maximize your strategic capacity. Devising good strategy isn't a solo endeavour. Both Ganz and Sharp offer insights on how to make a group with good strategic capacity. Set aside regular times to talk *specifically* about strategy with your comrades. Bring together a diverse core group of well-connected and strongly motivated people who have common goals (but who are not dogmatic or obsessed with personal agendas). Give them a decision-making structure that encourages them to express different

opinions but allows them to converge on a common plan. And make sure they are connected and in some way responsible to a broader movement.

Use and develop your intelligence capacity. Strategic discussions can be greatly sharpened by good intelligence. All of the intelligence products —like target lists or political spectrum analyses—can streamline strategic development.

Analyze strengths and weaknesses. A good tool for this is the "SWOT" analysis. Divide a page into four quadrants, and label the quadrants strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Then, by yourself or with a group, answer in point form: What are our group's strengths? What are our weaknesses? What opportunities do we have? And what threats do we face? You can also ask, about a campaign or tactic under discussion, will this strengthen or weaken those in power? Will it strengthen or weaken our movement?

Brainstorm tactics and operations. Make a list of different campaigns or actions you *could* carry out. Then start to evaluate them. Which tactics could you accomplish already? Which of them require more practice, people, or resources than you currently have? Which are exciting and essential, and will form a core part of the campaign? Which are impractical or unexciting and should be set aside for now? I like to write down favorite ideas on index cards and then shift them around, arranging them into a plausible, escalating campaign. Maybe a single campaign, maybe several simultaneous threads carried out by allied groups, or maybe a succession of campaigns that build on one another.

Learn your history and current events. You don't have to know every single aspect of every historical struggle—or memorize every battle of every revolution—to come up with good strategy. No strategy will ever be perfect. But you do need *some* grounding in the past. To become a

composer, a musician learns other people's music first—to internalize those rhythms and chords—so that they can come up with something new.

Run scenarios and wargame it. As a resistance strategist, you are in a struggle of competing ideologies and strategies. You can never plan a strategy on paper and apply it perfectly to the real world, because those in power will always be trying to disrupt your strategy and destroy your movement. Simulate that by setting up wargames; divide your group into parts where one side implements a resistance strategy and the other side tries to suppress and disrupt it. Adjust accordingly. Or run through different scenarios and plan for contingencies. What if this happens? What if that happens?

Remember practicalities. High-level strategy and visioning are wonderful, but a movement's success often comes down to basic questions of capacity. Who are your allies and how do you organize? What are your communication networks and considerations? Do you have the logistical capability to support the campaign you want? Can you make a list of the capacities you need and draft a rough timetable of support and tactics for your campaign?

Consider the unquantifiable. I'm a stickler for concrete elements of strategy, like building organizational capacity and practicing skills. But not everything about a resistance movement can be inscribed on a map or enumerated in lists. Many a campaign has pulled victory from the jaws of defeat by something unquantifiable: spiritual fortitude, or revolutionary zeal, or the ability to inspire extraordinary effort and commitment.

I've put more ideas and heuristics in Further Resources.

■ ■ ■

Unlike the Allies of World War II, resisters almost never create a single, unifying grand strategy. So our strategies should generate as much political force as possible while keeping in mind that our allies will often use very different strategies. I hope that—by using guidelines like those I suggested at the end of the third chapter—we can build complementary strategies even with people we don't want to work with directly. That means, especially, the use of many different tactics.

This was another SHAC strength, as *Rolling Thunder* explains: "Rather than pitting exponents of different tactics against each other, SHAC integrated all possible tactics into one campaign, in which each approach complemented the others. This meant that participants could choose from a practically limitless array of options, which opened the campaign to a wide range of people and averted needless conflicts."

Effective complementarity also requires finding good intermediate goals. Creating opportunities for smart, strategic cooperation with others in a larger grand strategy, rather than disparaging anyone who works for anything short of the immediate and complete transformation of everything. *Rolling Thunder* observes: "Overextension is the number one error of small-scale resistance movements: rather than setting attainable goals and building slowly on modest successes, organizers set themselves up for defeat by attempting to skip directly to the final showdown with global capitalism. We can fight and win ambitious battles, but to do so we have to assess our capabilities realistically."

We can fight. And we can win.

Epilogue

“. . . Yet my mind was not at rest, because nothing was acted, and thoughts ran into me, that words and writings were all nothing, and must die, for action is the life of all, and if thou dost not act, thou dost nothing.”
—Gerrard Winstanley, 1649

“Settle your quarrels, come together, understand the reality of our situation, understand that fascism is already here, that people are already dying who could be saved, that generations more will die or live butchered half-lives if you fail to act. Do what must be done, discover your humanity and your love in revolution. Pass on the torch. Join us, give up your life for the people.”
—George Jackson, 1970

I wrote this book to try to answer a question: what makes resistance movements effective? I have found what I hope will be valuable lessons in movements of the past and present day. At the same time, I have only scratched the surface. The history of resistance is deep and broad and incredibly rich. Fortunately there are other books and—more importantly—other people.

“We’re never going to have a revolution just because everyone has read all the right books,” Peter Dundas, a longtime activist, told me. We can

learn many things from books. But we can learn even more—and test those lessons—in action.

In the first chapter of this book I outlined some of the reasons we fight. Many of these reasons have only become more compelling in the time since I began drafting this book. Global capitalism continues to falter and increase human exploitation to compensate. And the not-so-slow catastrophe of global warming accelerates faster than anyone expected. Climate change has triggered conflicts around the world and created tens of millions of climate refugees. And many privileged countries have begun to veer toward fascism.

In the final chapter, I almost left out the discussion of the Taiping and Nien Rebellions. I wondered if I should stick to more examples like Site 41. Smaller, community victories that we can identify with now. I worried that readers would not be able to identify with the situation of Chinese rebels in the middle of the 1800s. I worried that people would not believe that resisters today could learn lessons from such an extreme situation of chronic food shortages, growing capitalist exploitation, and the looting of public treasuries by heartless (and violent) corporations. But every day that passes—every newspaper I read—the more I am glad I kept those stories.

We'd best avoid the millennialism of the Taipings, their belief that divine intervention would transform their society and grant them victory. But the sense of apocalypticism that also drove them—a sense of impending, sweeping, uncontrollable change—is growing in resonance.

Audre Lorde argued that we should always stand up for justice, "because the machine will try to grind you into dust anyway, whether or not we speak."

Stan Goff put it bluntly when he wrote about how the dominant culture destroys the things we need to survive: "And just as exterminist imperialism eats up its own social basis, it is eating up the biosphere, our very physical basis. Revolution is not a choice between capitalism and socialism. It is a

choice between the violent overthrow of the existing order or our extermination by that order. Is that clear enough? Do we need a little sugar with that?”[493]

Of course, even Goff would note that there are many ways for resistance movements to generate force other than violence. But his point is clear: we fight or we die.

John Clarke of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty explained to me how global crises influence their fight against austerity. He explains: “This system is actually now in crisis. It’s in crisis at every level. I mean, it’s in crisis because the absurdity of producing with such technological complexity at such a scale, to enrich handfuls of families, is such a fundamental and absurd contradiction.” John adds:

> It’s literally true that humanity is doomed under this system. And in fact, the planet is probably doomed under this system. That means that the period we are now entering, as the system goes on the attack to such a huge degree, is, I think, a really, really decisive period. The first thing that we’ve got to be able to do is to fashion movements of resistance that are strong enough to actually fight them to a standstill. That’s the first thing. I don’t know how we’re ever going to talk to people about changing society if we can’t even prevent them taking people’s welfare cheques away, or closing their factories. We have to be strong enough to win victories.
>
> But, at the same time, any victory that you are going to win takes place in the context of a system that is going to regroup and come after you again, and in any event, is going to poison the world you live in. . . . Within the lifetimes of many people who are alive today, that struggle has to go to the point of revolutionary change. And I think that the work we’re doing, in a

> very practical sense, is about laying the groundwork for that revolutionary change. Because revolutionary change comes out of people's consciousness and people's practice. People have to learn to fight back before they can learn how to actually win. That's the work that we are doing.

What John says here is very important. It's essential that we understand how serious our situation is, how serious the consequences are if we fail to create effective movements. But at the same time, those movements won't be created instantaneously. Rome wasn't built in a day, and the Roman Empire wasn't defeated in one. We need to be motivated by the global emergencies we face—by the need for uncompromising action—but at the same time understand that we must build movements that can win smaller victories first to overcome inertia and cultures of defeat, as John points out.

Reminiscing about lessons learned from the 1960s and 1970s, anarchist Michael Albert writes: "It seems to me that we should have conveyed the understanding that revolution isn't apocalyptic. It doesn't happen tomorrow. It's a long process. One has to be in it for the long haul, and one has to carve out a space in which one can function, be productive, and live a life."[494]

We have to build cultures of resistance, but also make them cultures worth living in. That doesn't mean we have to be nice to everybody all the time. But it means we must come to understand—from history, hopefully, rather than experience—that an isolated movement is a defeated movement. And that our militant action will be most effective when launched from a large and diverse culture of resistance. Michael Albert writes: "We don't need to eliminate our more militant tactics. Not at all. But we do need to give them greater meaning and strength by incorporating with them much more outreach; organizing many more events and activities that have more diverse and introductory levels of participation; creating more local means for ongoing involvement by people just getting interested; and especially by

spending more time clarifying issues, aims, and the logic of our activity to new audiences who don't yet agree with our efforts."[495]

I argued in the last chapter that much of any movement's power is implied. Michael Albert makes a similar argument in *The Trajectory of Change*, warning that even enormous mass movements can be contained and quashed if they reach a plateau (which has happened to several anti-war movements and the summit-hopping anti-globalization movement). He argues: "To win, we need to generate a trajectory of activism that elites cannot easily repress or manipulatively derail, and which they also can't calmly abide. That is the logic of social change in the near and even middle term.

"But what threatens elites that cannot be readily repressed away or derailed? The only answer I know of is rapidly growing numbers of dissidents, varied diversifying focuses of their dissent, and steadily escalating commitment and militancy of their tactics."[496]

History teaches us that such movements can be built. We can build them. If we learn from the lessons I have tried to illustrate in this book, It'll be clear how to create *movements that win.*

Let's recap: We know that militant movements work, and that militant wings make larger moderate movements more effective. Many movements —from suffragists, to the ANC, to Redwood Summer—have taught us that. That's the Overton Window and radical flanking in action.

We know from the Deacons for Defense and grassroots civil rights organizers that resistance groups of many different kinds can form complementary movements. That militant and moderate approaches can strengthen each other, can use radical flanking to create change that would otherwise be impossible, and can combine outreach with direct action. That both push for, and consolidate, social and political change through a ratchet of progress.

“Settle your quarrels,” urged George Jackson. It’s very telling that the common factors behind successful revolutions, as identified by historians, are very similar to the factors that make for successful coalitions I outlined in the last chapter.[497] Jeff Goodwin argues that successful revolutionary movements are *multi-class* movements, unified by a common enemy and some common values, along with radical leadership.[498] Revolutionary movements can succeed when *divide and conquer* has been inverted; when social movements have been brought together by common causes and organizational links, while those in power are divided and some people of privilege begin to align themselves with the oppressed.

Diversity makes movements strong, just as it makes ecologies strong. A robust and effective social movement, as Jo Freeman argues, is “one that has several organizations that can play different roles and pursue different strategic possibilities.” Such groups build solidarity and strong connections, synthesizing common ideas and building common ground.

As Audre Lorde argued: “Without community, there is no liberation . . . but community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretense that these differences do not exist.” Successful resistance groups work against many kinds of internal oppression—racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and the like. They look outward to overcome the iron law of involution that Jane Mansbridge warns about. Indeed, Suzanne Marilley inverts the iron law of involution to argue “that social movements are more likely to succeed when they construct inclusive ideological appeals that promote political alliances.”[499]

An effective movement must also balance the danger of being too diffuse (the tyranny of structurelessness) with the risk of becoming so conventionally organized and resource hungry that it falls into the orbit of larger powers (the liberal class, the Nonprofit Industrial Complex) or loses its strategic capacity.

But movements that win don’t simply appear out of nowhere. They aren’t miracles that spring fully formed from some inevitable tide of history. Successful movements from the PAIGC to anti-apartheid coalitions to the Mississippi Summer show the importance of recruiting and training new people, and of moving people through a radicalizing trajectory by action, and not merely by ideas or literature.

Movements that win take isolated people and join them into effective groups with strong ties. Not insular communities in which to hide, but *havens* from which to reach out and take action. Movements from the Industrial Workers of the World to ACT UP show the power of organization. They show the need for organizational style to match strategy and tactics, and the victories that can be won when that happens. And they show the need for many groups with complementary strategies and styles to form strong and beautiful ecologies of resistance.

Movements that win must learn all the other lessons of movement capacity. The importance of security and safety that comes from reasonable precautions combined with support and relationship building, rather than paranoid self-isolation. The need for communications that avoid the distorting effects of the mass media while allowing movements to reach out, coordinate, propagandize, and discuss.

Movements that win understand the importance of intelligence capacity in helping a movement find its targets and prioritize finite resources and of counterintelligence that protects movements while actively fighting *divide and conquer* repression. They understand the necessity of logistical support systems that make it possible for people to fight in the long term without watering down their politics or starving themselves of the resources they need.

And of course, they need tactics that are smart and well targeted with achievable goals. They need diverse forms of direct action to use the principles and patterns that have made such action effective through history.

They need strategies that escalate smartly from short-term achievable goals that strengthen movements and build capacity, all the way through to grand strategies of liberation. They need to build diverse groups with strategic capacity. And they need to ally with other groups when they can to advance common goals.

I have often argued for the necessity of militant action, but diversity of tactics goes both ways. Communications and logistical support and all these other capacities are terribly important. You could easily spend your entire life working on any of these fundamental support capacities, without spending a day on the front lines or in jail. And you could be just as much my ally as someone who put themselves on the front lines constantly, or who spent years in jail.

George Jackson and Martin Luther King Jr. would not have seen eye to eye on issues of pacifism and violence. But I will forever admire them both for their total commitment and for their willingness to give their lives for their struggles. In a speech delivered a few months before his assassination, King argued:

> Ultimately you must do right because it's right to do right. . . . You must do it because it has gripped you so much that you are willing to die for it if necessary. And I say to you this morning, that if you have never found something so dear and so precious to you that you will die for it, then you aren't fit to live.
>
> You may be thirty-eight years old as I happen to be, and one day some great opportunity stands before you and calls upon you to stand up for some great principle, some great issue, some great cause—and you refuse to do it because you are afraid; you refuse to do it because you want to live longer; you're afraid that you will lose your job, or you're afraid that you will be criticized or that you will lose your popularity or you're afraid that somebody

> will stab you or shoot at you or bomb your house, and so you refuse to take the stand.
>
> Well you may go on and live until you are ninety, but you're just as dead at thirty-eight as you would be at ninety! And the cessation of breathing in your life is but the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit. You died when you refused to stand up for right, you died when you refused to stand up for truth, you died when you refused to stand up for justice.[500]

We can frame the same idea in a positive light, as United Farm Workers cofounder Dolores Huerta did when she said: "Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world." To live is to seize those opportunities.

When George Jackson wrote the passage I used as an epigraph for this chapter, he warned of the generations that would die or live butchered half-lives if we fail to act. In the decades since he wrote that, industrial capitalism has introduced whole new methods to enact that prophecy.

When he urged the reader "give up your life," Jackson didn't mean all revolutionaries literally had to die. Certainly *he* died for the people, but he meant we should *dedicate* our lives. To set aside things that are less important for the greater good. To work hard, and to fight, even when it is not fun. When it is difficult, dangerous, exhausting.

When we give up our lives to do this, our lives do not become smaller. They become bigger. We become a part of a greater collective life of struggle, which spans the continents and lasts through centuries past and future.

Which is exactly what's needed. Because George Jackson is right, and his warning seems ever more prescient. If we have any hope of a future worth living in then a great many people—a great many of *us*—must

dedicate our lives to that purpose. And must dedicate it in a million different ways.

That's something I'm willing to do. I hope that you, dear reader, will make that choice also. Perhaps you have already. Perhaps we will be comrades. Perhaps I'll see you on the front lines. However you struggle, let us fight together for a future worth living in.

For more great resources that wouldn't fit in the book, visit
FullSpectrumResistance.org.
You'll find extra information about things like:
■ Resistance codes of conduct
■ Movement recruitment
■ Stopping abusive behaviour
■ Counter-surveillance
■ Coping with prison
■ Strategic heuristics problem-solving And more.

Glossary

These words are defined for the purpose of this book, and as used by various resistance movements.

- **Aboveground.** People or groups which operate openly, or without strict secrecy (contrast with underground.)
- **Action.** (1) An event or tactic; (2) a way to achieve change; action can exist on a spectrum from direct to indirect (see "Taxonomy of Action" in chapter 3, p. 99).
- **Activist.** A resister; someone who takes action on a cause that is important to them, possibly as part of a group or movement.
- **Anarchism.** The rejection of systems of coercive control and authority in favor of voluntary organization, mutual aid, and participatory decision-making. Politically, the polar opposite of fascism and authoritarianism. Contrary to popular perception, anarchism does not mean chaos.
- **Anarchist.** One who believes in anarchism.
- **Apartheid.** A violent system of racial segregation and control, separating people on the basis of race for housing, jobs, transportation, and social relationships. Generally referring to the system of South African apartheid which was institutionalized from 1948 to 1991.
- **Cadre.** The person (singular) or people (plural) who carry out the basic organizational functions of a resistance movement; usually trained and dedicated. They are often professional organizers, the backbone of a resistance movement. (See also *leaders* and *combatants*.)
- **Campaign.** An effort to create social, political, or economic change, usually of a set duration and with a specific attainable goal. A campaign typically consists of an escalating series of actions combined with organizing, mobilization, and communication (among other capacities).
- **Capitalism.** A term that emerged from the French Revolution to refer to the exploitation of the poor by the rich. In capitalism, the wealthy become the dominant force in society, and they change the rules to make it easier for them to get rich at the expense of

everyone else. While the term was meant to criticize this exploitation, twentieth-century capitalists took the term for themselves.

- **Coalition.** An alliance of different groups and organizations to pursue a common goal or campaign. Often temporary rather than permanent.
- **COINTELPRO.** The FBI's COunter INTELilligence PROgram, which used surveillance, dirty tricks, and systematic violence to try to quash liberation movements in the United States and to turn them against each other, officially ended after the program's exposure in the early 1970s (see chapter 9). Also used to refer to similar programs in the United States and other countries.
- **Colonialism.** A system by which an empire can dominate and exploit other nations through means including military force, the pillaging of resources, slavery and forced labor, cultural assimilation, economic domination, political control, or by displacing native peoples with settlers.
- **Combatant.** An organizational or movement role; a person who engages in direct confrontation and conflict against systems of injustice; a militant.
- **Co-opt.** When threatened, the powerful will sometimes try to appropriate the cause—or control the organization—of a movement that opposes them. A group that is co-opted may still use the language of resistance, but it will serve people of privilege instead of challenging them.
- **Counterintelligence.** Efforts to thwart the intelligence efforts of an opponent, which could include protection against espionage, infiltration, or assassination. Also used for active attempts to disrupt other organizations; see *COINTELPRO*.
- **Dissident.** A person who believes differently from those in power; a person who believes that prevailing social, economic, or political systems are wrong or unjust. (The challenge for dissidents is to take action and to become *resisters*.)
- **Force.** In contrast to (or in combination with) persuasion, resistance movements generate different kinds of force to disrupt systems of power and induce change. There are many kinds of force, including economic force, political force, social force, and physical force. Force is not synonymous with violence.
- **Grassroots.** A style or organizing which is "bottom-up" and rooted in local communities, participatory decision-making, and collective action (as opposed to "top-down" styles coordinated by centralized elites or powerful organizations).

- **Guerrilla warfare.** A style of conflict in which small groups of armed combatants use sabotage, ambush, mobility, and other techniques to fight a larger conventional military. A form of asymmetric conflict (in which one side has much more military power).
- **Infiltrator.** One who joins a movement under false pretenses, usually on behalf of a government or intelligence entity, to gather information and sow discord. If their purpose is also to provoke reckless and counterproductive action, they are an agent provocateur.
- **Intelligence.** Knowledge that helps a movement make decisions, maximize limited resources, and plan and carry out actions; intelligence is information plus analysis. Intelligence is mostly about the opposition, but can also be about allies and the field of conflict. (See chapter 8.)
- **Leader.** Those who inspire and organize a movement, and who often make or facilitate decisions; they often do this in public (in contrast with *cadres*, whose work is often in the background). While in guerrilla groups a leader may exercise command and control, leaders in grassroots groups tend to lead by persuasion and example.
- **LGBTQ+.** An abbreviated acronym that alludes to a vast diversity of sexuality and gender expression and peoples including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, genderqueer, nonbinary, intersex, two-spirited, and asexual, among many others.
- **Liberal.** Seeking reform within existing systems, rather than *radical* change and the fundamental restructuring or overturning of dominant power structures. While reforms of existing power structures can produce important incremental changes, many liberals also benefit from the privileges those structures provide; that comfort can cause liberals to oppose substantial change. (See “The Liberal Class” in chapter 2.)
- **Lobbying.** An attempt to convince those in power to change their actions, hearts, or minds, usually through persuasion and rational argument (in contrast with the use of economical, physical, or social force).
- **Logistics.** A capacity of movements that involves moving people and stuff, and providing people with the resources, equipment, and services they need. Sometimes it’s divided into “movement, materiel, and maintenance.” (See chapter 10.)
- **Militant.** A person who works for rapid change by trying to confront injustice via struggle, disruption, and conflict. (Contrast with *moderate*.)

- **Mobilize.** To bring into action people who are already sympathetic to a cause or movement. To mobilize people is to take them off "the path of least resistance" and encourage them to exercise their power to challenge systems of injustice.
- **Moderate.** A person who works for change through communication, dialogue, compromise, and gradual or incremental progress. (Contrast with *militant*.)
- **Movement.** A collection of overlapping organizations, groups, and individuals, all working toward some roughly common goal of social, political, or economic change. Strong movements are diverse and able to take collective action.
- **Nonviolence.** A principle of action whereby resisters avoid physically harming their opponents; this may be for ethical reasons (e.g., "violence is wrong and we shouldn't create more of it") or strategic reasons (e.g., "we are outgunned and don't want to provoke a physical fight we can't win; adhering to nonviolence will give us the moral high ground"). Nonviolent resisters focus on other ways of disrupting systems of power (e.g., civil disobedience or blockades). While nonviolent resisters avoid harming people in positions of power, those resisters are often put in danger of experiencing violence themselves.
- **Operations.** In campaign planning, operations is the middle level between detailed, low-level tactics and long-term, high-level strategy.
- **Oppression.** A system of power in which some groups of people are marginalized, disempowered, or subordinated to give benefits or privilege to the oppressor group. Types of oppression include racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and many others.
- **Organize.** (1) To take isolated or scattered individuals and bring them together into groups and movements that can undertake collective action; (2) in labor unions, especially, to recruit new union members.
- **Organizer.** An activist or resister who works to develop resistance capacity and engage and mobilize people into broader movements or campaigns.
- **Propaganda.** Communication meant to promote a cause or change beliefs. Some dictionaries define propaganda negatively as "biased" in contrast with "objective" information like news broadcasts. However, many radicals treat the word "propaganda" as neutral, recognizing that supposedly objective information sources like news broadcasts, educational materials, or government statements usually have their own forms of bias.

- **Radical.** Seeking profound change in society (from Latin *radix* meaning "root"). Radicals want to restructure society in fundamental ways, and historically have worked to dismantle or abolish systems of power like apartheid, patriarchy, and slavery. (Contrast with *liberal*.)
- **Resistance movement.** A movement working to challenge, disrupt, and dismantle systems of oppressive power. (Contrast with *revolutionary movement*.)
- **Resister.** Once who takes action to challenge, disrupt, and dismantle systems of oppressive power. (Contrast with *dissident*.)
- **Revolutionary movement.** A movement which goes beyond disrupting or challenging systems of power, and attempts to put in place new forms of power or social organization based on their revolutionary ideologies.
- **Security.** (1) Approaches or techniques used to try to keep resisters safe from reprisals or repression, or to reduce risks involved in resistance. (2) May also refer to "security culture," a specific set of rules used by some activists (see p. 250).
- **Strategy.** (1) A particular approach used to resistance, e.g., "a strategy of direct confrontation." (2) The planning and coordination of a conflict or resistance movement at a high level and over the long term.
- **Symbolic action.** Typically, an action that shows discontentment against those in power without actively disrupting systems of power. The term "symbolic action" is also used by many radicals to criticize an action they see as ineffective. (This is a slippery term; for a better system, see discussion on decisive, shaping, and sustaining actions, explored in chapter 11: Actions & Tactics.)
- **Supporter.** A person who believes in the goals of a movement and helps to advance their cause through moral support (e.g., speaking in favor of the movement and its work) or material support (e.g., donations or volunteer time). Supporters may be *auxiliaries*; they may not be full participants in a movement (see also *cadres*, *leaders*, *combatants*).
- **Sympathizer.** A person who agrees with the general goals of a movement, but doesn't yet take action to directly support or participate in that movement.
- **Tactic.** (1) A particular way of taking action; e.g., a blockade is a tactic. (2) Detailed planning and coordination of specific actions. (Contrast with *strategy*.)
- **Target.** The person, place, or thing at the focal point of an action or tactic.

- **Underground.** People or groups that organize and act in strict secrecy. Underground groups tend to be compartmentalized and use a firewall to separate themselves from aboveground (e.g., open or public) groups. (See p. 256.)
- **Violence.** Injury to a living creature (in contrast with damage to property).

Notes

1. Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals*, p. 81.
2. The definitive resource on these events (if there can be a definitive resource on anything driven so largely by anarchists) is *We Are an Image from the Future: The Greek Revolt of December 2008*, edited by A. G. Schwarz, Tasos Sagris, and Void Network.
3. Almost all of the information about this particular action is from "Vortex" and recounted in Schwarz et al., *We Are an Image from the Future,* pp. 173–176.
4. It probably helped that the actionists outnumbered the police by fifty to two, which might not stop police from trying to arrest people at "peaceful" protests, but definitely stopped them in Greece.
5. Jo Freeman. "The Women's Movement," as printed in Goodwin and Jasper, *The Social Movements Reader*, p. 22.
6. Ibid., p. 22.
7. Ibid., p. 24.
8. Ibid., p. 25. (Emphasis added.)
9. Ibid., p. 25. (Emphasis added.)
10. Ibid., p. 25.
11. Ibid., p. 30.
12. Upton Sinclair, *The Cry for Justice,* p. 754.
13. Or consider another example from *We Are an Image from the Future.* Four members of a counter-information group (Ego Te Provoco) in Athens: "Traditionally, we are against using the media to communicate with the public. . . . Theoretically the argument is that you cannot fight alienation with alienated means. You cannot claim that journalists are the scum of the earth and snitches, and at the same time be using them. And on a higher level it's the question of the spectacle, of whether you could actually use the media." They favor face-to-face communication, even to the point of rejecting Indymedia. Schwarz et al., *We Are an Image from the Future*, p. 232.
14. Lloyd, *Suffragettes International*, p. 46.
15. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets,* p. 28.
16. Gamson and Modigliani, "The Changing Culture of Affirmative Action."
17. Boykoff identifies several key frames: the violence frame, the disruption frame, the freak frame, the ignorance frame, and the amalgam of grievances frame. Pages 222 and onward.
18. Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching,* p. 27.
19. Rose, *How to Win Campaigns*, p. 153.
20. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets, p.* 304.

21. These factors make it incredibly difficult for social movements to present a comprehensive critique of the status quo. As Gitlin explains: “Deadlines increase the pressure to keep the story simple, using what is at hand. In general, then, a single story —provoked by a single event—projects only a single field. *The crucial, unintended ideological effect is to undermine whatever efforts movements may make to present a general, coherent political opposition; the effect is to reinforce the image that reform movements focus . . . on single grievances which the system, however reluctantly, can correct without altering fundamental social relations.* The media thus support the dominant system’s claim to general legitimacy and its ability to fragment opposition.” Gitlin, *The Whole World is Watching,* p. 35.
22. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, chapter 13.
23. Ibid., p. 254 and pp. 306–307.
24. I often think of what Margaret Thatcher said after ten IRA prisoners starved themselves to death in 1981 in a (largely successful) struggle for Prisoner-Of-War rights. Thatcher continued to insist there was no political basis for their struggle: “Crime is crime is crime. It is not political.”
25. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, p. 215.
26. Ibid., p. 203.
27. Ibid., p. 204.
28. See Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching,* p. 28. And also Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets,* p. 212.
29. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets,* pp. 214–15.
30. Ibid., pp. 179–180.
31. Ibid., p. 188.
32. Ibid., p. 188–89.
33. Ibid., pp. 297–98.
34. Ibid., p. 299.
35. Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching,* p. 159.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., p. 174.
38. Ibid., p. 173.
39. Jules Boykoff observes the same phenomenon at work more generally. “For activists, the routinization of protest activity paves the way to being disregarded by the mass media.” (*Beyond Bullets,* p. 177.) He argues: “Contained, sanctioned actions are not likely to garner mass-media attention, but disruptive, novel events improve the chances of mass-media interest.” (Ibid., p. 28.) But pursuing mass-media attention can lead to actions that are more militant, more weird (like levitating the Pentagon), and possibly otherwise more strange or alienating to potential supporters.
40. Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching,* p. 30.
41. Ibid., p. 30.
42. Ibid., pp. 161–62.
43. Ibid., p. 162.

44. Gitlin cites Bob Moses of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and Mario Savio of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement.
45. Ibid., p. 178.
46. Ibid., p. 203.
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid., p. 204, Gitlin quoting Mark Rudd in 1968.
50. Ibid., p. 204.
51. In a campaign called “Get clean for Gene” many hippies cut their hair and dressed more conventionally to support the presidential campaign of anti-war Democrat Eugene McCarthy in 1968, but lost the Democratic primary to Hubert Humphrey, who then lost the election to Nixon.
52. Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching*, p. 210.
53. Rose, *How to Win Campaigns*, p. 77.
54. Rolling Thunder, “The SHAC Model.”
55. Rose, *How to Win Campaigns*, p. 14.
56. Ibid., p. xx.
57. Ibid., p. 2.
58. McHale, *Communicating for Change*, p. 17.
59. PBS, “Am I Not a Man and a Brother?”
60. Rose, *How to Win Campaigns, p.* 3.
61. Ibid., p. 116. Speaking more broadly, Mark Somma writes: “Successful insurgencies require a clear political message in order to communicate effectively with the populace. It’s a requirement that revolutionary environmentalism doesn’t yet meet, as it presents a muddled political message. It’s primarily a message of ‘don’t’ . . . but it doesn’t provide a viable framework for positive action to bring about social transformation.” (Mark Somma, “Revolutionary Environmentalism: An Introduction” in Best and Nocella, *Igniting a Revolution*, p. 39.)
62. Rose, *How to Win Campaigns*, p. 116–17.
63. Ibid., p. 117.
64. Ibid., p. 99.
65. Though ACT UP is most famous for using this graphic, it was created by a small group of gay activists in New York shortly before ACT UP was created.
66. Crimethinc. is an example of a group that has gotten very good at this for their audience.
67. Rose, *How to Win Campaigns*, p. 25.
68. Ibid., p. 124.
69. Ibid., p. 14.
70. Ibid., p. 16. This is about more than just framing in interviews—it’s an attitude that affects whole campaigns. (Site 41, which I’ll return to in the final chapter, is a good example.)
71. To deal with this, he suggests first raising an explicitly ethical challenge. Secondly, make separate scientific, economic, legal, or otherwise rational challenges in addition

to the ethical and emotional. Third, introduce emotional triggers properly. Ibid., pp. 106–7.

72. Ibid., p. 10.
73. Ibid., p. 56.
74. This rough structure appears in Rose, *How to Win Campaigns*, p. 133.
75. Gelderloos, *How Nonviolence Protects the State*, p. 103.
76. Ibid., p. 104.
77. Schwarz et al., *We Are an Image from the Future*, p. 154.
78. Golnaz Esfandiari, "The Twitter Devolution."
79. Noam Cohen, "In Unsettled Times, Media Can Be a Call to Action, or a Distraction."
80. Navid Hassanpour, "Media Disruption Exacerbates Revolutionary Unrest: Evidence from Mubarak's Quasi-Experiment."
81. Lusseyran, *And There Was Light*, p. 76.
82. Ibid., pp. 76–77.
83. Ibid., pp. 109–110.
84. Ibid., p. 111.
85. Ibid., p. 146.
86. Ibid., p. 162.
87. Ibid., p. 166.
88. Ibid., p. 166.
89. Ibid., p. 165.
90. Ibid., p. 167.
91. Ibid., pp. 166–67.
92. Ibid., p. 167.
93. Ibid., p. 169.
94. Ibid., pp. 169–170.
95. Ibid., p. 175.
96. Ibid., p. 171.
97. Ibid., p. 172.
98. Ibid., p. 184.
99. Ibid., p. 173.
100. Ibid., p. 192.
101. Ibid., p. 186.
102. Ibid., p. 174.
103. Ibid., p. 198–200.
104. Ibid., p. 208.
105. Ibid., pp. 227–230.
106. Trivia-Library.com, "Time and History 9:15 P.M. D-Day Warning Broadcast."
107. Chris Soghoian, "For Hezbollah, It's Fiber Warfare."
108. M. R. D. Foot in Elliott-Bateman, *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare*, p. 49. For further reading see *London Calling North Pole*, H. J. Giskes, Kimber, 1953 (German perspective). And *Inside North Pole*, Pieter Dourlein, Kimber, 1954.
109. Foy, *Michael Collins's Intelligence War*, p. 178.

110. Burton-Rose, *Creating a Movement with Teeth,* p. 161.
111. Foy, *Michael Collins's Intelligence War,* p. 25.
112. Ibid., p. 179.
113. M. R. D. Foot in Elliott-Bateman, *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare*, p. 45. Further reading: *The Strategic Bomber Offensive* by Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, 1961.
114. From "Intelligence: The Common Denominator" by Donald McLachlan, in Elliott-Bateman, *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare,* p. 53.
115. Ibid. p. 54. Emphasis added.
116. Burton-Rose, *Creating a Movement with Teeth,* pp. 161–62. Converted into a bulleted list from a single paragraph.
117. This text from his post-apartheid statement to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. See the Amnesty Committee's report granting him amnesty for ANC/MK operations. Available at http://www.doj.gov.za/trc/decisions/2001/ac21168.htm.
118. Foy, *Michael Collins's Intelligence War,* p. 52.
119. United States Marine Corps, MCDP-2 *Intelligence,* p. 12. Emphasis added.
120. Robert Lovelace in Agyeman, *Speaking for Ourselves,* p. xiii.
121. Foy, *Michael Collins's Intelligence War,* p. 53.
122. Elliott-Bateman, *The Fourth Dimension of Warfare,* p. 109 and 121.
123. Dobson, *The Troublemaker's Teaparty*, p. 113.
124. Collins, *The Path to Freedom*, p. xiii.
125. Remember that a resistance movement's territory isn't only geographical, but also social, cultural, ideological, and so on.
126. Most of the following notes based heavily on The Ruckus Society Scouting Training Manual, Version 1.0. 4/13/2003. Page 2.
127. Ibid.
128. This is still done today; mapping companies add small, imaginary roads called "trap streets" and other errors to their maps so they can tell if their maps are being reproduced without permission.
129. bernz, "The complete social engineering FAQ."
130. Kevin Mitnick, a security consultant and former network cracker, has written two books on social engineering: *The Art of Deception* and *The Art of Intrusion.* According to Mitnick, tricking someone into giving away a password is usually quicker and easier than trying to hack into a computer system to get around the password. Oftentimes social engineering is done over the telephone, to conceal the genuine identity of the operator.
131. United States Marine Corps, MCDP-2 *Intelligence,* p. 8. Emphasis added.
132. Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor*, p. 382.
133. Ibid., p. 387.
134. Quoted in "The Nature of Military Intelligence" by Christopher Andrew, in Neilson and McKercher, *Go Spy the Land: Military Intelligence in History*, p. 12–13.
135. Ibid, p. 13.
136. Mansbridge, *Why We Lost the ERA*, p. 164.

137. This likely played a role, too, in the "surprise" election of Donald Trump as US president.
138. On one occasion, the forewarned Irish dissidents decided not to flee, to illustrate to the people how nasty the British occupation was. So police found it strange when their "surprise" raids found dissidents with luggage packed, ready to go to jail. Their obvious preparation, however, risked tipping police off to the extent of the IRA intelligence.
139. Oppenheimer and Lakey, *A Manual for Direct Action*, p. 15.
140. Ibid., p. 20.
141. Ibid., p. 17.
142. Ibid., p. 20.
143. Ibid., p. 19.
144. Rigden, *SOE Syllabus*.
145. Sources: Diapositive, "Witold Pilecki."

    NPR Staff, "Meet The Man Who Sneaked Into Auschwitz."

    Institute of National Remembrance, "Biography Rotamaster Witold Pilecki."
146. The full text of Witold's Report can be read at the Internet Archive: https://archive.org/details/WITOLDREPORT
147. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, p. 314.
148. This date, of course, is International Women's Day.
149. Mark Mazzeti, "Burglars Who Took On F.B.I. Abandon Shadows."
150. *Democracy Now!* "It Was Time to Do More Than Protest."
151. *Democracy Now!* "From COINTELPRO to Snowden, the FBI Burglars Speak Out After 43 Years of Silence."
152. Theoharis, *The FBI: A Comprehensive Reference Guide*, p. 126.

    See also this article from the *Los Angeles Times*: Allan M. Jalon, "A Break-In to End All Break-Ins." (March 8, 2006).

    Also a copy of the letter accompanying the documents is available here: http://www.brandywine-peace.com/COINTELPRO%20dreamweaver%20test.htm
153. Theoharis, *The FBI*, p. 126.
154. Collins, *Grand Strategy: Principles and Practices*, p. 53.
155. Different thinkers divide the various COINTELPRO tactics into differing groups and categories. I organize them here in a practical way, clustering tactics together where they require a similar response from resistance movements.
156. Reprinted in Churchill and Vander Wall, *The Cointelpro Papers*, pp. 110–11. Emphasis underlined in original.
157. U.S. Congress, Senate Select Committee to Study Government Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities, *Final Report—Book III*, p. 228.
158. Pierrick Bourrat, "People More Strongly Condemn Bad Behaviour When Cued That They Are Being Watched."
159. Brian Glick, *War At Home*, full text can be read at https://archive.org/stream/War_At_Home/War_At_Home_djvu.txt

160. COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM, INTERNAL SECURITY, DISRUPTION OF THE NEW LEFT. A letter from J. Edgar Hoover. Available at: http://www.namebase.org/foia/fbi01.html.
161. Brian Glick, "COINTELPRO Revisted."
162. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, p. 89.
163. Brian Glick, *War At Home.*
164. Gary T. Marx, "Thoughts on a Neglected Category of Social Movement Participant: The Agent Provo-cateur and the Informant," p. 434.
165. John William Sayer, *Ghost Dancing the Law: The Wounded Knee Trials*, p. 203.
166. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, p. 123.
167. Neil Tweedie, "Eco Infiltrator Mark Kennedy: The Great Betrayal."
168. Collins, *The Path to Freedom*, p. 69.
169. Foot, *SOE*, p. 144.
170. Ibid.
171. More background on Anna Mae Aquash in Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, p. 119, among other places.
172. Brian Glick, *War At Home.*
173. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, p. 140.
174. Ibid., p. 142.
175. COUNTERINTELLIGENCE PROGRAM, INTERNAL SECURITY, DISRUPTION OF THE NEW LEFT. A letter from J. Edgar Hoover. http://www.namebase.org/foia/fbi01.html
176. Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets*, p. 78.
177. Ibid, p. 81.
178. Brian Glick, *War At Home.*
179. I would like to thank Bari biographer Steve Ongerth for a phone discussion about Bari's work and experiences with repression. For more about his biography of Bari, visit http://www.judibari.info/.
180. There's considerable information about Bari's case at her official website (http://www.judibari.org/), and at the Albion Monitor (http://www.monitor.net/monitor/bari/interview.html).
181. Nicholas Wilson, "The Judi Bari Bombing Revisited."
182. Ibid.
183. Ibid.
184. Bill Weinberg, "Judi Bari Suit Against FBI Reveals COINTELPRO Against Earth First!"
185. Austin, *Up Against the Wall*, p. 214.
186. Ian F. W. Beckett, *Encyclopedia of Guerrilla Warfare*, "Boer War."
187. U.S. Army, Counterinsurgency Field Manual: FM3–24. Page 5–21.
188. Ibid.
189. The Pew Center on the States, "One in 31: The Long Reach of American Corrections." March 2009.

http://www.pewtrusts.org/~/media/assets/2009/03/02/pspp_1in31_report_final_web_32609.pdf

190. Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations*, p. 87.
191. Collins, *The Path to Freedom*, p. 86.
192. Ibid.
193. U.S. Army, Counterinsurgency Field Manual: page 1-10, para 1-51.
194. Roldo Bartimole, "Nestlé Pressures Notre Dame Students."
195. For additional analysis, see also: http://www.mintpressnews.com/stratfor-strategies-how-to-win-the-media-war-against-grassroots-activists/166078/
196. From a speech given by Ronald Duchin to the National Cattleman's Association of the United States; excerpts were published CALF News, June 1991.
197. Mangold and Penycate, *Tunnels of Cu Chi*, p. 108.
198. Prados, *The Blood Road*, pp. 299–317.
199. A US division is about 20,000 soldiers.
200. With its compartmentalized sections and hidden doors, a map of the physical tunnels looks much like a network diagram of an underground organization.
201. Mangold and Penycate, *Tunnels of Cu Chi*, p. 70.
202. Ibid., p. 75.
203. Ibid., p. 81.
204. Ibid., p. 44 and p. 73.
205. Ibid., p. 73.
206. Ibid., p. 263.
207. None of which is to say that the NLF was saintly; it had its own problems. Some Anti-American forces in Vietnam killed civilians, and their backers in Communist China had self-interested reasons to support the struggle. But we can still learn a great deal from the fight.
208. Foxton, *Powering War: Modern Land Force Logistics,* p. 9.
209. Turner, *Mau Mau Women*.
210. Ibid.
211. Schwarz et al., *We Are an Image from the Future*, p. 34.
212. L. Allen's book *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*, from the version with updated notes reprinted in Incite!, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded*, pp. 53–54.
213. Incite!, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded,* p. 55.
214. Ibid, p. 56.
215. Ibid, p. 88.
216. Ibid, p. 71.
217. Ibid, p. 72.
218. For a fascinating exploration of how engineering companies, foundations, and the military have worked together over the decades, see John Perkins's book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man.*
219. For a scholarly discussion of the cooptation of grassroots organizers in Mexico, see "Co-optation, Competition, and Resistance: State and Street Vendors in Mexico City" by John C. Cross (https://cs.uwaterloo.ca/~alopez-o/politics/competition.html) or

Brachet-Marquez, Viviane, 1992 “Explaining Sociopolitical Change in Latin America” in *Latin American Research Review* 3:91–122.

220. Incite!, *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded,* p. 10.
221. Ibid, p. 64.
222. Ibid, p. 107.
223. Ibid, p. 108.
224. Flanagan, *Successful Fundraising,* p. 19.
225. Ibid, p. 21.
226. Ibid, p. 20.
227. Ibid, p. 114.
228. Hedemann, *War Resisters League Organizer’s Manual*, p. 53.
229. If you are fundraising for a really small, grassroots group you may not want to hand out slick, glossy pamphlets. Photocopied materials may seem more consistent.
230. There is still room for different levels of donation, especially in long-term fundraising campaigns. Plenty of organizations have titles like supporter, patron, sustainer, and so on, at different levels.
231. Hedemann, *War Resisters League Organizer’s Manual*, p. 81.
232. Flanagan, *Successful Fundraising,* p. 74.
233. I would add that paid work as a union organizer is similarly useful experience, and it’s a skill set that applies both for fundraising and recruitment.
234. Flanagan, *Successful fundraising*, p. 31.
235. Ibid., p. 74.
236. Ibid., p. 77.
237. Ibid., p. 91.
238. Ibid., p. 21.
239. Roy, *Broken Republic*, p. 94.
240. Burton-Rose, *Creating a Movement with Teeth,* p. 90.
241. Schwarz et al., *We Are an Image from the Future*, p. 52.
242. This decree had been in place for more than a decade at the point, having been issued by the UN in 1974.
243. Encyclopedia Britannica, “Logistics.” www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/346423/logistics.
244. Goff, *Full Spectrum Disorder,* pp. 59–60.
245. Based in part on the US Field Manual on Guerrilla Warfare, which identifies several main logistical requirements:

    “Necessities to enable guerrillas to live; such as food, clothing and shoes, shelter, and medical equipment.”

    “Combat equipment for the conduct of operations.”

    “Sufficient transportation to enable guerrilla units to distribute supplies.”

    “A medical system to care for sick and wounded.“

    “Essential services, for example—the repair of shoes and clothing.”
246. Burton-Rose, *Creating a Movement with Teeth,* p. 266.

247. Ibid., p. 131.
248. Ibid., p. 131.
249. Macksey, *For Want of a Nail*.
250. AMPRONAC: The Association of Nicaraguan Women Confronting the Nation's Problems, sometimes just called The Women's Association.
251. Randall, *Sandino's Daughters*, pp. 17–18.
252. Ibid., p. 73.
253. When the SOE was preparing to insert agents into Occupied Europe, there was not global mass manufacturing of clothing as there is now. So they literally had to have emigrants from occupied countries *hand-sew* apparel for their agents in the style of the particular region they were going to. And when the SOE decided to make camouflaged explosives that would blend in with the scenery of the time, they made things like explosive horse dung to put on roads frequented by Nazi vehicles.
254. In a decentralized resistance movement, logistical capabilities need to be redundantly replicated at every level of an organization and in every team or affinity group. Every person needs to be familiar with security culture and communications. Every person needs to be able to do basic maintenance and repairs on the equipment they use, while combatants in particular need to be able to safely use and maintain the weapons or other specialized equipment. Every person needs to be familiar with basic first aid and medicine. Every person needs to be able to be able to use coded communications systems, navigate, and move about in a secure fashion. Every person needs to be familiar with basic survival techniques as well as escape and evasion. Each group needs to have people with a higher-than-basic level of training and ability in these basic fields—specialists of some variety.
255. Chabal, *Amilcar Cabral*, p. 110.
256. Ibid., p. 112.
257. Ibid., p. 119.
258. Ibid., p. 122.
259. Ibid., p. 111.
260. Shrader, *The Withered Vine: Logistics and the Communist Insurgency in Greece*, p. 264.
261. Ibid., p. 253.
262. In some cases, Japanese commanders willingly transferred their weapons to the guerrillas and offered training in their use as a kind of "screw you" to their Western enemies.
263. Tanham and Sheehan, *Communist Revolutionary Warfare*, p. 36. "Vietminh" without space is in original.
264. *Macksey, For Want of a Nail*, p. 157.
265. Marian E. Vlasak, "The Paradox of Logistics in Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies . . ."
266. Bracamonte and Spencer, *Strategy and Tactics of the Salvadoran FMLN Guerrillas*, p. 175. Emphasis added.
267. Ibid., pp. 178–79. Mistakes were sometimes made in the delivery—for example, Cubans failed to grind serial numbers off some weapons, allowing them to be traced

through Belgian manufacturers. Also, the FMLN had expected to be able to capture large supplies of ammunition from the government. However, they were never able to do so, and because they had not stockpiled, they constantly ran short.

268. Ibid., p. 184.
269. Ibid., p. 185.
270. Ibid., p. 183.
271. Ibid., p. 183.
272. Ibid., pp. 185–186.
273. Do or Die, “SHAC Attack!”
274. Rolling Thunder, “The SHAC Model.”
275. SHAC, “SHAC Victories.”
276. To give a small number of examples, a variety of US army and marine corps handbooks, historical military writings from China, Denis Vasilevich Davydov’s 1821 “Essay on the Theory of Partisan Warfare,” and the comparative analysis of principles in *Grand Strategy: Principles and Practices* by John M. Collins.
277. Ruckus Society, “Action Planning Training Manual,” Version 1.0, p. 3.
278. Ibid., p. 2.
279. Ibid., p. 3.
280. Goff, *Full Spectrum Disorder,* p. 182.
281. Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals*.
282. Ruckus Society, “Action Planning Training Manual,” p. 2.
283. This sort of thing happened to pacifists often, but very rarely when the Deacons were involved.
284. Ericson, *Radicals in the University*, p. 88.
285. Hedemann, *War Resisters League Organizer’s Manual*, p. 153.
286. Dobson, *The Troublemaker’s Teaparty*, p. 49.
287. US Army Field Manual 3-0, Operations.
288. Schwarz et al., *We Are an Image from the Future*, p. 66.
289. Sharp, *Self-Liberation*, p. 31.
290. Goff, *Full Spectrum Disorder*, p. 42.
291. The Economist, “Pipeline Bombs: Mexico’s Gas Infrastructure Comes Under Attack”; Miguel Hernandez, “Mexican Rebels Claim Pipeline Attacks.”
292. John Robb, “Global Guerrillas.”
293. Rolling Thunder, “The SHAC Model.”
294. John Robb, “Bazaar Dynamics.”
295. Quoted in “Tactical Innovation in the Civil Rights Movement” by Aldon Morris in Goodwin and Jasper, *The Social Movements Reader*, p. 232.
296. See, for example, the 1939 segregated library sit-in in Alexandia, Virginia. http://oha.alexandriava.gov/bhrc/lessons/bh-lesson2_reading2.html
297. Kasimere Bran, “Fire at Midnight, Destruction at Dawn,” p. 11.
298. Ibid., p. 8.
299. Goff, *Full Spectrum Disorder,* p. 179.
300. Helmuth von Moltke the Elder.

301. Guerrilla Warfare FM.
302. From “Memories of Freedom” by the Western Wildlife Unit of the Animal Liberation Front, p. 22.
303. Ibid., p. 22.
304. Ibid., p. 23.
305. Ibid., p. 23–24.
306. Ibid., 53.
307. US Army, Guerrilla Warfare Field Manual, p. 116.
308. Usually it’s good to ensure that people have their basic skills down and understand the plan before introducing elevated levels of stress, to ensure that people have the confidence and basic competence required to move forward to more challenging scenarios. At the same time, remember that human memory can be “context dependent”—we tend to remember things best when we are in a similar situation to when we learned them. So if you anticipate a stressful action, then people need to practice their roles under at least some stress in order to enhance their memory during the real thing. You can also introduce unexpected elements to the practice runs. Have a “guard” or a “cop” show up unexpectedly. Render part of the group’s equipment inoperable without telling them. (Not safety equipment, obviously.) Take a member of the team out of communication to see how the others cope. There’s no limit to creative stress-induction.
309. Supply flights to Poland from England could only happen in the winter, because that was the only time of year that the night was long enough to conceal the fourteen-hour flight (in an unheated cabin). Moonlight in particular would limit certain kinds of flights to a few candidate days every month.
310. For such a list of questions, see Joan Bondurant’s section in Hedemann, *War Resisters League Organizer’s Manual*, p. 155.
311. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*, p. xv.
312. Ibid., pp. xv–xvi.
313. Ibid., p. xvi.
314. Ibid., pp. xvi–xvii.
315. Ibid., p. xvii.
316. Ibid., p. 29–30.
317. Ibid., p. 31.
318. Ibid., p. 33. Regarding caste resistance in India, Scott quotes Edward B. Harper, “Social Consequences of an Unsuccessful Low Caste Movement,” *Social Mobility in the Caste System in India: An Interdisciplinary Symposium*, ed. James Silverberg, Supplement No. 3, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (The Hague: Mouton, 1968): 48–49, emphasis added by Scott.
319. Ibid., p. 36.
320. Ibid., pp. 8–9.
321. Ibid., p. 243.
322. Ibid., p. 242.
323. Ibid., p. 259.

324. Ibid., p. 262.
325. Ibid., p. 248.
326. Ibid., p. 248.
327. Ibid, p. 254.
328. Ibid., p. 254.
329. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, "Louis Riel."
330. Ed Hird, "The Passion of Louis Riel."
331. For a detailed history of this period, see James W. Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life*.
332. Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, p. 148.
333. Ibid., p. 45.
334. Ibid., pp. 27, 48, 60. Dumont was also a person of status among the Métis. On Dumont's circumstances and motivations, Woodcock writes: "Neither he nor his family stood to gain anything in the way of personal benefits from an uprising. Gabriel had secured the better part of his chosen land as a homestead under the land regulations, and he enjoyed a security of existence and even a level of income and living above that of most of his neighbours—benefits that the call to arms could only shatter. . . . [his family] did not stand to gain any great material benefits. They chose to fight because their freedom and pride as a people seemed to be threatened, and that has been the motive of all the resistance movements which in history have gained more lustre than common wars." (p. 157.)
335. Ibid., p. 11.
336. Ibid., p. 12.
337. Ibid., p. 13.
338. Ibid., p. 167.
339. Ibid., p. 139.
340. Ibid., p. 167. Emphasis added.
341. Ibid., p. 13.
342. Ibid., p. 179.
343. Ibid., pp. 179–180.
344. Robert E. Gard, "Massacre at Frog Lake."
345. Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, p. 188.
346. Ibid., p. 190.
347. John Chaput, "Battle of Cut Knife Hill."
348. Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, p. 216. On May 8, they ambushed the steamboat as it approached Batoche along the river. (See also: http://www.museevirtuel-virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/expositions-exhibitions/batoche/docs/proof_en_the_northcote.pdf)
349. Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, p. 212.
350. Ibid., p. 170.
351. Ibid., p. 192.
352. Ibid., p. 193.

353. I'd like to thank Usman Mushtaq for first bringing the details of this struggle to my attention and for sharing information from his own master's thesis research on the struggle.
354. Government of Ontario, "Order in Council, June 14, 1990." Pages 6–8 of attached report.
355. Chair of second Joint Board essentially states that the Premier's OIC overrides reality: "In spite of the fact that no new evidence was introduced in connection with this matter, I must accept not only that such a process exists but further that it is logical, traceable and replicable." Quoted Mushtaq, "Socially Just Engineering," p. 95.
356. *Canadian Press*, "Simcoe County Permanently Gives Up on Site 41 Dump."
357. CUPE Ontario, "Site 41 Arrests Point to 'Disturbing' Trend of Criminalizing Legitimate Protest, Warns CUPE Ontario President."
358. Ian F.W. Beckett, *Encyclopedia of Guerrilla Warfare*, entry for "Foco."
359. It's a sad but illustrative example of how even successful revolutionaries may not fully understand the phenomena that led to their success.
360. See "The East European Revolutions of 1989" by Jeff Goodwin in Goldstone, *Revolutions: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies*, p. 260.
361. Albert, *The Trajectory of Change*, p. 9.
362. Marshall Ganz, "Why David Sometimes Wins: Strategic Capacity in Social Movements," p. 5.
363. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition*, p. 25.
364. Ibid., p. 172.
365. Ibid., p. 10.
366. Ibid., pp. 10–11.
367. Ibid., p. 176.
368. Ibid., p. 139.
369. Ibid., p. 23.
370. J. Christopher Soper, *Evangelical Christianity in the United States and Great Britain: Religious Beliefs, Political Choices*, p. 86.
371. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition*, p. 67.
372. McQueen, *Offbeat Kentuckians*, "Carrie Nation: Militant Prohibitionist."
373. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition*, p. 19.
374. Ibid., pp. 63–64.
375. Ibid., p. 162.
376. Ibid., p. 182.
377. Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition*, p. 13.
378. Ibid., p. 180.
379. Ibid., p. 165.
380. Ibid., p. 181.
381. Ibid., p. 198.
382. Asbury, *The Great Illusion: An Informal History of Prohibition*, pp. 144–145.
383. This opium was cultivated in another colony, India.
384. Ssu-yü Teng, *New Light on the History of the Taiping Rebellion*, p. 42.

385. Compilation Group, *The Taiping Revolution,* p. 1.
386. Ibid., pp. 8-9.
387. Ibid., pp. 19, 28, and 36.
388. Chiang, *The Nien Rebellion*, p. vi.
389. Ibid., p. 10.
390. DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements,* p. 89.
391. Chiang, *The Nien Rebellion,* p. 41.
392. Ibid., pp. 41–42.
393. Ibid., p. 44.
394. Ibid., p. 42.
395. Compilation Group, *The Taiping Revolution,* pp. 44–48.
396. Ibid., p. 41.
397. Ibid., p. 45.
398. Ibid., pp. 40, 60.
399. Ibid., p. 77.
400. Ibid., pp. 71–72.
401. Ibid., p. 72.
402. Ibid., p. 69.
403. Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare*, p. 40.
404. Ibid., p. 41.
405. Regarding officers, see Teng, *New Light,* p. 72.
406. Elleman, p. 41. Also, Compilation Group, p. 48, and Teng, p. 74.
407. Teng, *New Light,* p. 71.
408. On schisms, see also Compilation Group, *The Taiping Revolution,* pp. 74 and 78.
409. Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare,* p. 60.
410. Many people in the Taiping organization were illiterate, and the frequently issued religious proclamations meant little to them. Teng, *New Light*, p. 73.
411. Elleman, *Modern Chinese Warfare,* p. 57.
412. DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*, p. 90.
413. Ibid., p. 89.
414. Chiang, *The Nien Rebellion*, p. 102.
415. Ibid., p. 104.
416. Ibid., p. 106.
417. DeFronzo, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements,* p. 89.
418. Van Dyke and McCammon, *Strategic Alliances: Coalition Building and Social Movements, p*. 303.
419. Bystydzienski and Schacht, *Forging Radical Alliances Across Difference*, p. 28.
420. Ibid., p. 157.
421. Ibid., p. 118.
422. Ibid., p. 157.
423. Van Dyke and McCammon, *Strategic Alliances,* p. xvii.
424. Ibid., p. 103.
425. Ibid., p. 156.

426. Ibid., p. 258.
427. Ibid., pp. 258–59.
428. Ibid., p. 259.
429. Bystydzienski and Schacht, *Forging Alliances Across Difference*, p. 148.
430. Quoted in Mushtaq, “Socially Just Engineering,” p. 90.
431. That said, political opportunity may not be as necessary for coalitions as the other factors. In the analysis cited, political opportunity was a beneficial factor 73 percent of the time, but considered in less than half of the studies analyzed. Factors like ideological alignment, political threats, and prior social ties were favorable at least 90 percent of the time.
432. Benita Roth in Van Dyke and McCammon, *Strategic Alliances*, p. 148.
433. Ibid., pp. 107–108.
434. Ibid., p. 111.
435. Ibid., p. 107.
436. Ibid., p. 112.
437. Ibid., p. 112.
438. Ibid., p. 106.
439. Ganz, “Resources and Resourcefulness,” p. 1004.
440. Ganz, “Why David Sometimes Wins,” p. 2.
441. Ibid., p. 3
442. Ganz, “Resources and Resourcefulness,” p. 1022.
443. Ibid., p. 1023.
444. Ibid., p. 1024.
445. Ibid., p. 1025.
446. Ibid., p. 1026.
447. Ibid., p. 1027.
448. Ibid., p. 1028.
449. Ibid., p. 1029.
450. Ibid., p. 1033.
451. Ibid., p. 1033.
452. Ibid., p. 1035.
453. Ibid., p. 1035.
454. Ibid., p. 1035.
455. Ibid., p. 1036.
456. Ibid., p. 1034.
457. Ibid., p. 1038.
458. Ibid., p. 1039.
459. Ibid., p. 1040.
460. Ibid., p. 1040.
461. Ganz, “Why David Sometimes Wins,” p. 7. Emphasis added.
462. Ibid., p. 9.
463. Ibid., p. 10.
464. Ibid., p. 11.

465. Ibid., pp. 11–12.
466. Ibid., p. 15.
467. This is partly because women are enculturated to listen instead of to just talk, which means that group is actually able to build a cohesive solution instead of just blabbing on. “Social sensitivity” is a key idea used in this research, which women tend to rate higher on. See, for example: Derek Thompson, “The Secret to Smart Groups: It’s Women.”
468. Ganz, “Resources and Resourcefulness,” p. 1042.
469. Ganz, “Why David Sometimes Wins,” p. 18.
470. Thompson, “The Secret to Smart Groups.”
471. Ganz, “Why David Sometimes Wins,” p. 18.
472. Ibid., p. 19.
473. Ibid., p. 19.
474. Ibid., p. 19.
475. Ibid.
476. Ibid., p. 21.
477. Ibid., pp. 22–23.
478. Goff, *Full Spectrum Disorder,* p. 175.
479. Tanham, *Communist Revolutionary Warfare,* p. 39.
480. Goff, *Full Spectrum Disorder,* p. 177.
481. Ibid., p. 178.
482. Ibid., pp. 178-79.
483. Sharp and Raqib, *Self Liberation,* p. 8.
484. Ibid., p. 18. Also further readings suggested on page 19.
485. Ibid., p. 19.
486. Ibid., pp. 31–32.
487. Ibid., p. 33.
488. Ibid., p. 41.
489. Ibid., p. 28.
490. Greenfield. *American Strategy in World War II: A Reconsideration,* p. 27
491. Ibid., pp. 28–29.
492. Ibid., p. 29.
493. Goff, *Full Spectrum Disorder,* p. 211.
494. Albert, The *Trajectory of Change*, p. 111.
495. Ibid., p. 17.
496. Ibid., p. 24.
497. For a couple of “top five” lists written by historians, see DeFronzo’s *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements* (pp. 10–11) and two pieces in Goldstone’s *Revolutions: Theoretical, Comparative, and Historical Studies:* Goodwin (p. 259) and Goldstone (p. 262).
498. In Goldstone, *Revolutions,* p. 259.
499. These words are paraphrased by Ann-Marie Szymanski in Szymanski, *Pathways to Prohibition*, p. 10.

500. From Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “But if not” sermon, which you can listen to at http://www.drmartinlutherkingjr.com/

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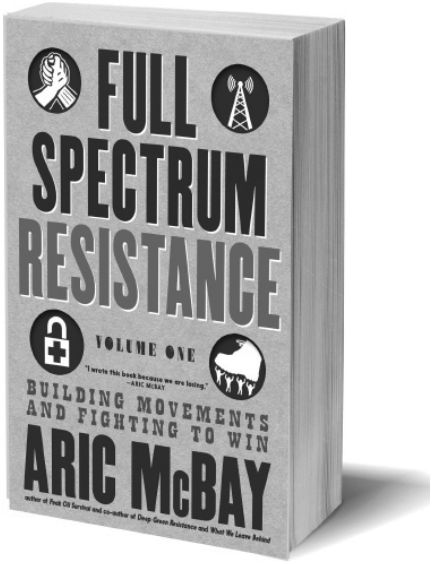

In *Volume One: Building Movements and Fighting to Win*, McBay describes the need for resistance, and paints a portrait of what a thriving movement might look like today. Citing successful movements such as the American civil rights movement's Deacons for Defense and Justice, the anti-colonial revolutions in Guinea and Cape Verde, and activist groups such as ACT UP, McBay deftly illustrates how to organize movements and encourage enlistment, while also noting the necessary precautions one must take to protect radical circles from infiltration and collapse.

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